

MURRAY'S MAGAZINE.

JULY, 1887.

Why are our People Unwilling to Emigrate?

Is it true that the people of the United Kingdom, or of England chiefly, are unwilling to venture abroad? This is a question to which our whole history for centuries has seemed to give a peremptory no. The settlement of the American Plantations; the creation of the New England States; the peopling of the West India Islands; the occupation of Canada, Australia, South Africa, to say nothing of the half million who govern the Indian Empire, all these unequalled enterprises of the British and Celtic races place the United Kingdom at the head of all the colonizing peoples of the world. Nevertheless, there is at this day a reluctance in our people to rise up and to fare forth into lands beyond the sea. This *vis inertiae* has no doubt always existed, even when our great historical adventurers and colonizers were leading out the first fathers of our Colonial population. There was then a majority who looked on in wonder at the daring and the hardihood of those who left them behind. This will also be true now, but this is not the question we have to meet. Is there, as it is affirmed, a special reluctance at this moment, more than at other times, in our people to leave their mother country? There are reasons to believe this to be true; and these reasons are partly inherent in all people, and partly resulting from causes which need not and ought not to

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exist. We will try to weigh both, but our chief care is to examine these latter causes which ought to be removed : for we are responsible for their existence.

Though there is no people in the world more maritime and adventurous than the people on the seaboard of England, Ireland, and Scotland, there is no people more rooted in their homes than the midland population of these islands, especially of England. The Teutonic love of home prevails over the Scandinavian love of the sea. Our Saxon forefathers were not seafaring. Three sea-voyages were a qualification for an Earldom. There is no doubt that the love of home is deep-rooted in the English people. Nothing more beautiful and peaceful can be found than a homestead of the midland and southern counties : a thatched cottage, with creepers on the wall ; a garden with roses and lilies, apple-trees, and a cherry tree, a bed of potatoes and lettuce, and often a corner sown with wheat. Such homes as these, half a century ago, were the freehold and the heirloom of a ploughman or a shepherd, who could remember his father and mother by the bright peat fire, and has seen his own children playing on the threshold. It is no wonder that men and women should shrink from going out from all that holds their hearts so fast. These homes are indeed passing away, but they still exist. There is, however, a reverse of this picture. For long years one third of the people have congregated in our cities and towns, many of them in hovels not fit for human habitation ; families overcrowding single rooms with all the human miseries of such inhuman state. We should have thought that they would have readily risen up in the hope of a better shelter ; but, strange to say, the *vis inertiae* is still strong : and they cling even to the sufferings which have become a second nature. Add to this the love of their mother country, which is a part of natural piety, with the love of kindred and friends, which are bonds fast enough to bind strong men, and to hinder their spirit of venture. In the Irish race the love of the very land on which they were born, and in which they would fain be buried is so tender, that when they leave it they will carry with them some handfuls of its earth to be laid with them in their graves.

Another restraining cause is a fear of the unknown : the perils by land and sea with all the toils and privations of journeys and voyages. They have been so long patient under their lot, that they shrink from the chances of any change. And to this

is to be added the uncertainty of success in an unknown land, in an untried lot. They have had a hard task to deal with and to master the difficulties of their daily struggle for bread, and what will they be able to do in a new state, which they do not know, and for which they have never been trained? They have had full experience of the uncertainties of their past life which they can measure and meet; but the future in an untried lot they can neither measure nor forecast. They will have to begin life over again, leaving behind them all the investments that they have laid up in the good-will and confidence of those among whom they have grown up to manhood. It may be also that they have entered into middle life: and to make a new launch is a great venture in which many have sunk. All these uncertainties would weigh with a man who is alone in the world, and has no one to care for but himself. How much weightier they become when he has wife and children, and perhaps also a father or mother, depending upon him?

There remains one other reason, very powerful in its effects. If the people have cause to think that there exists in any quarter a desire to clear them off the face of their mother country, every instinct of manhood and of natural independence rises up to rivet them to the soil, in which they have an inalienable right to so much as will give them burial. We need not dwell on this point. It must be stated, lest it should be forgotten, and when stated, it will not be forgotten as a law of natural justice before which human laws must hold their peace.

So much then for the reasons and causes which make our people unwilling to venture abroad.

We will now turn to see how far this unwillingness has prevailed. Notwithstanding all the restraining motives hitherto enumerated, there has been a steady and strong yearly stream of emigration from England, Ireland, and Scotland. In the last 30 years, 3,000,000 have left our shores. From the last Return of the Board of Trade, published by Mr. Giffen, it appears that the number of British-born subjects who left our shores in the first three months of 1886 was 30,700; in 1887, 44,446, that is, 14,000 more than in the previous year. Again, 44,000 in all left this country, and of these 30,000 went to the United States. We must be glad that our people should find a home in the United States, and the growing number of English-born who mingle with the population of the States will be, we may trust, a

RETURN of the NUMBERS, NATIONALITIES, and DESTINATIONS of the PASSENGERS that left the UNITED KINGDOM for places out of EUROPE during the MONTH ended MARCH 31, 1887, and the THREE MONTHS ended MARCH 31, 1887, compared with the corresponding periods of the previous YEAR :—

MONTH ENDED MARCH 31.

NATIONALITIES.	United States.		British North America.		Australasia.		All other Places.		Total.	
	1887.	1886.	1887.	1886.	1887.	1886.	1887.	1886.	1887.	1886.
English	8,438	4,951	2,302	1,011	1,710	2,131	983	695	13,433	8,788
Scotch	2,301	1,107	307	70	256	432	113	102	3,037	1,711
Irish	6,298	2,821	208	69	294	424	41	18	6,841	3,332
Total of British Origin	17,037	8,879	2,817	1,150	2,260	2,987	1,137	815	23,311	13,831
Foreigners	11,180	5,844	464	33	60	30	130	101	11,834	6,008
Nationality not distinguished . . . . .	..	..	..	..	..	..	254	184	254	184
Total	28,217	14,723	3,281	1,183	2,320	3,017	1,521	1,100	35,399	20,023

THREE MONTHS ENDED MARCH 31.

English	16,658	11,191	3,127	1,513	5,929	6,402	2,477	2,119	28,191	21,225
Scotch	4,094	2,079	406	124	846	917	369	290	5,715	3,410
Irish	9,159	4,767	363	164	907	1,057	113	77	10,542	6,665
Total of British Origin	29,911	18,037	3,896	1,801	7,682	8,376	2,959	2,486	44,448*	30,700*
Foreigners	14,881	10,059	512	94	224	140	317	531	15,934	10,824
Nationality not distinguished . . . . .	..	..	..	..	6	..	905	514	911	514
Total	44,792	28,096	4,408	1,895	7,912	8,516	4,181	3,531	61,293	42,038

Commercial Department, Board of Trade, April 5.

R. GIFFEN.

* The above figures, being made up at the earliest possible date after the close of each month, are subject to correction in the annual returns.

growing security for the amity and unity of the two countries. Nevertheless it must obviously be our desire that our people should find their home within the bounds of our own lands. One of the aims of the movement in behalf of State-directed colonization is to guide the stream of emigration into our own channel, and to retain our brethren still as subjects with us of the British Empire.

In his Report to the Board of Trade, Mr. Giffen pointed out that the emigrants who succeed in the Colonies powerfully attract those whom they have left at home; emigrants follow emigrants, they attract each other. Each new settler draws to him others from the mother country. Mr. Maguire, in his work on the Irish in America, has given large evidence on this point. The multitudes who went to the United States during the famine fever of 1847 drew after them an immense following; and vast sums of money were transmitted to Ireland to bring parents or kinsmen over the Atlantic. The reasons in this case were no doubt exceptional, and specially constraining: but the same attraction has been found to exist not in Ireland only, but in England and in Scotland. A foreign land loses its strangeness and distance when parents or children have already made it their home. The more this attraction is strengthened by larger emigration, the less powerful will become the restraints which keep men back. It is certain that the spirit of adventure and of courage which animated our forefathers when the New World was first opened, has become dormant among us. And yet England of that day was large enough for its population of five or six millions. There was then room enough for all and to spare. We are now crowded to excess. Our population grows by nearly 400,000 every year: our four seas are inexorable in their blockade. It is therefore a dictate of natural prudence to encourage this attractive power of our Colonies; and to enlarge the range of its influence. And, further, so to direct it that the manhood and energy, the intelligence and the skill of our race shall not wander beyond our bounds; but shall expand the mother country and build up our commerce and Empire. In the year 1886, 232,900 persons of British origin left our shores; but the annual growth of the population, as shown by the Census, in Great Britain is nearly double that number. Every year, therefore, the pressure of population on our narrow surface is becoming more serious. It is affirmed that in the Agricultural Counties of England 75,000 are born every year, or three-quarters

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of a million in ten years. For these there is little or no employment, and it is computed that of them 600,000 go into the manufacturing and mining counties, or into London and its suburbs. So that not more than 150,000 go beyond sea.

No doubt want of will to leave the country is a powerful obstacle, but it is certain that want of means keeps at home many that would be willing to go. And this also explains why so many go to the United States. The voyage is shorter and cheaper. Excepting only Canada, our Colonies are distant and the sea-passage is dear.

Evidence has been given from all parts of the United Kingdom during the last five or six years showing beyond doubt that very large numbers of our working population have been from time to time only occasionally employed, or altogether and for long periods of time out of employ. This is disputed every year as to London; but though loose statements may exaggerate the case, it is undeniable that large numbers suffer from want of work, for weeks and for months. But it must be borne in mind that want of work for a day is loss of wages, and loss of wages is loss of food for many mouths. It is easy to be stoical when suffering does not touch us. The life of those who live by toil is more than from hand to mouth, for when the hand is idle for a day, the mouth is empty. Mr. Alfred Simmonds, President of the Kent and Sussex Labourers' Union, in a pamphlet three years ago, has shown how fallacious are statistics on the alleged decrease of pauperism. He says: "Attention has been directed to the Poor Law Returns. Lord Derby has publicly exhibited the figures, and has claimed that, there being a considerable decrease in the number of persons receiving parish relief, the inference must be drawn that the poor are better off than heretofore. Under ordinary circumstances this would be so. As a matter of fact, the direct contrary is the case at the present moment. The decrease of pauperism, *as shown by the figures*, means a terrible increase of poverty and starvation. Let us see. Let us take the Returns of Pauperism for the decade 1872 to 1882. In 1871-2, the old Poor Law Board issued repeated orders to the Boards of Guardians to be more stringent in granting outdoor relief. When the Local Government Board superseded the Poor Law Board, the new authority continued the crusade against outdoor relief, and still do so. In lieu of outdoor relief the 'order for the House' is given—the 'House test' applied. Large numbers of poverty-stricken

families prefer their rags, their own over-crowded room, with its killing atmosphere, their misery, their independence, rather than enter the Workhouse. I sympathise with them. I would do the same myself. It is not to be assumed that I am advocating indiscriminate outdoor relief, but observe the operation of the 'House test.' In 1872 there were, in England and Wales, 977,400 paupers, namely, 154,000 indoor and 823,000 outdoor. The figures have changed. In 1882 there were, in England and Wales, 797,000 paupers, namely, 188,000 indoor and 609,000 outdoor. Showing a decrease of 214,000 outdoor; but *an increase of no less than 34,000 indoor paupers*. Regard these figures in the light of the 'House test' policy, make full allowance for attempted imposition, and who would voluntarily imagine the mass of concealed heart-breaking, the hopeless misery represented by the decrease of outdoor paupers?"

The number of indoor paupers has steadily increased since 1882. The Poor Law Returns for 1885 show that the number of *indoor* poor had increased up to that time to an excess of 40,000 beyond the number of *indoor* poor in 1872.

But it must not be thought that the Poor Law Returns give any adequate measure of the poverty of our population. They exhibit only the helpless and hopeless state of nearly a million of our people who are ready to perish. But these are not the kind of whom emigrants or colonists are made. No Colony could redeem them: no Colony would receive them: nor would the mother country be guilty of deporting them to die abroad. There are, however, other classes among whom the severest poverty is found. And it may be without fear asserted that there is a larger number throughout the country who periodically suffer the extremes of poverty. A national and commendable pride, which is self-respect and a sense of honest independence, forbid their applying to a relieving officer. The Royal Commission on Education in 1860 divided the poor into the dependent poor, and the independent poor. The dependent were in workhouses, prisons, and other public institutions. The independent poor comprised all others who live by "work and wages." But of these, excepting only a few who can lay by, such as the unmarried, or the childless, it is strictly true to say that they live always, even in full work, upon the brink of poverty. A sickness, an accident, the bankruptcy of a master, a bad harvest, a cotton famine, illness in the family, vicissitudes in trade and causes without end, may at any moment throw them

out of work, and even if by thrift they have laid by a little, a few weeks will exhaust it. This will include three whole classes. 1. Artizans with all their skill. 2. Small tradesmen ruined by co-operative competition, or by the failure of their customers—that is, of workmen out of work. 3. And both of these classes when they have sunk to the state of precarious and transient or casual employment.

These three classes are steadily sinking into extreme poverty, and many even into pauperism. Between poverty and pauperism there is a broad difference. The best of men and the best of families may sink into extreme poverty, but they can only become paupers through their own vice, or through the House test, which relieves a family only on the condition of breaking up its home, and with it all hope of recovery. Men driven by their own misery, and the misery of those dear to them, are the prey of demagogues. The three classes before described are not paupers, and ought never to sink into pauperism; nor, with exceptions, would they ever become paupers if a wise and adequate help were promptly given to them. They might become efficient and thriving Colonists, if there were at home and abroad a public spirit which is watchful over the people and cares for the prosperity of the Commonwealth. But public spirit is rare and low in these days of self-indulgence.

One of the most distinguished of the Colonial Representatives reproached us the other day by the following contrasts. He said: "We in Australia know everything that happens in England." Such was the substance of his words. "We sedulously read your many newspapers, and we know the details of everything that passes. You never see our newspapers, and you know nothing of us. In this there ought to be a reciprocity of knowledge and of sympathy. We feel ourselves to be unknown and out of mind."

If the upper classes, who have all the means of knowledge, know so little of the Colonies, is it a wonder that the people know less? How then should they dream of what they do not know? They seek work till they are weary, and ask help till it is exhausted: they turn their hands to everything that they can find till they can find no more. But the thought of a new land, a new home, a new beginning, with a new future of work and hope, is beyond the horizon of their daily wants and cares. It is not their fault. How should they think of that of which they have never heard, which even those above them so little know?

The Colonial Governments have done something to diffuse knowledge among the people at home. But still how few have knowledge certain and detailed enough to move them to any serious thought of such a venture? The Imperial Exhibition of last year; the presence of so many of the chief men of our Colonies, the Statesmen, Governors, Prime Ministers, Judges, and merchants; and the Colonial Conference of this year, have done much to rouse attention and enquiry.

It must, however, be said to the honour of some of our self-governing Colonies, that they have done much in the last ten years. Canada, New Zealand, Queensland, New South Wales, have voted, and advanced in loans, large sums of money to enable people to migrate from England to their soil. Between 1873 and 1883 many thousands accepted this aid. But now, Canada alone continues this assistance. The others have practically ceased. New Zealand, and the principal Australian Colonies, used to grant free, or assisted ocean-passages. Multitudes availed themselves of this help. And even since this help has been withdrawn, the offices of the Colonial Agents in this country have been beset by working people anxious to go to the Colonies. Queensland still grants free passages to farm labourers, and to women domestic servants under stringent regulations as to age and fitness. The office of the Agent-General is so pressed by applications, that for some months to come no more can be admitted.

Mr. Simmonds, already quoted, is also Secretary of the State-directed Colonization Society, and from him the statistics here given are derived. He has been long engaged in the work of emigration. As Secretary of the State-directed Colonization movement, he has been enabled to send out 11,000 of our working people in the ten years between 1873 and 1883. And since the Colonial Governments discontinued the granting of free ocean-passages, though he has been compelled to give public notice that they were no longer granted, nevertheless he computed the number of persons wishing to leave England for our Colonies at nearly 10,000. He believes also that if the Government at home and the Governments of the Colonies would join hands in a system of State-directed Colonization, 50,000 applications would at once come in.

The causes then which make people unwilling to go over the sea will never be overcome except by a fuller knowledge of the state of the Colonies, and of those who settle in them; nor

again, until by wise co-operation between the mother country and the Colonies, the means of transit and of settlement shall have been secured to those who are willing to go.

It will be seen that by State-directed Colonization is not meant the transporting of individuals singly as adventurers without mutual relations, and without provision made for them in the land whither they are going; nor, again, is it proposed that this shall be done by grants of public money, but by loans, and by commercial enterprise. Societies some time ago were willing to convey families to Canada, to build a dwelling on land granted by the Canadian Government, and even to cultivate a portion of the land for the first year's subsistence at a rate so moderate that the loan could be easily paid off. What Juvenal says of honesty may be said of State-directed Colonization, "*Probitas laudatur et alget.*" Everybody praises honesty, but leaves it out in the cold. Everybody commends colonization, but declares it to be financially impossible. And so it will be until Government at home and over-sea shall take it resolutely in hand.

That what has been said may not end in vagueness, it will be well to set down precisely the Scheme of State-directed Colonization which was submitted to Lord Granville, then Colonial Secretary, and by him referred to the Local Government Board.

1. The Imperial Government to create a permanent Colonization Board; the representatives in London of co-operating Colonies to sit *ex officio* on the Board. The Colonization Board to be responsible to H.M.'s Secretary for the Colonies.
2. The Imperial Government to provide the necessary funds by way of loan.
3. The co-operating Colonies to place in the hands of the Colonization Board tracts of Government lands for Colonization purposes.
4. The people proceeding to the Colonies to be classed as, 1, Emigrants or, 2, Emigrant Colonists. The former class to be sent only where labour is known to be in demand; the latter class to be planted on the lands in the hands of the Colonization Board.
5. Pioneer parties of single men, Emigrants, to be sent under contract to clear and prepare lands, build dwellings, &c., for the Emigrant Colonists to follow after.

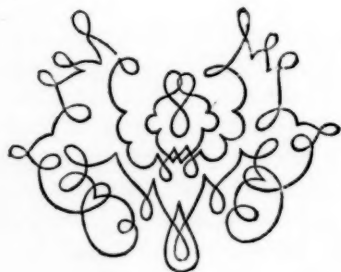
6. The Emigrant Colonists to undertake to repay by annual instalments the cost of their settlement, with interest.
7. The Colonial Governments to nominate experienced Colonists to act, for a time, as resident Superintendents of settlements, and to establish in each settlement a Post-Office and money-receiving house for the reception of repayments, with power to enforce payments due, if necessary.
8. Food stores to be provided during the early stages of the settlement under the Superintendent; advances to be made to settlers until the arrival and sale of first crops.
9. The Colonial Governments to reserve sites in each settlement for public buildings and trades.
10. No person to be sent without the approval of the Representative of the Colony concerned.
11. The Colonization Board and its operations to be kept distinct from Board of Guardians, and from all contact with pauperism.
12. Colonies desiring labour only to make special contract with the Colonization Board.
13. Each Colony to be invited by the Home Government to work with the Colonization Board, especially in respect to shipping, and other like interests.

This scheme is now under careful examination. On the 11th of February last a meeting was held, which resulted in the formation of two Committees, one of members of the House of Lords, the other of members of the House of Commons. All political or party character was carefully excluded from the treatment of this question by the selection of Secretaries from each side of the two Houses, namely, Lord Longford and Lord Monkswell for the Lords, and Mr. Lawson and Mr. Seton-Karr for the Commons. These Committees have been working both apart and in conference.

We have no need to prove the benefit that would result to the country, both at home and abroad: to the development of the Colonies and of the Imperial commerce: to the consolidation of the Empire by bonds and sympathies stronger than all federations. All this is admitted even by the objectors who dwell on the financial impossibilities. A hundred years ago, who would have believed the creation of the British Empire to be possible? When once some such Colonization Board

shall have formed its relations with the Colonial Government, the unwillingness of our people to go abroad by reason of want of knowledge, want of means, want of advice, want of help, want of the plain, practical and direct facilities of such a venture will be overcome. For the existence of these obstructions we are all responsible, and shall be so long as we go on coldly objecting to every plan, and magnifying the financial difficulties. When once these causes are removed, the people will be found prompt and glad to venture, as our forefathers, into lands which are no longer strange and wild to them, but their mother country still, and a home beyond the sea.

HENRY EDWARD, CARD. ARCHBISHOP.



The Jewel Merchants of Mynors Court.

It was a happy day for me and Clarice when I was knocked down under an omnibus near the Mansion House.

Ten minutes previously I should have thought it a happy day for me personally had I been run over and killed, for I was sick at heart, as well as starved in body. Not only starving myself, but sick with heart-suffering from watching my poor Clarice fading, indeed dying for lack of the food and comforts her late severe illness imperatively demanded.

But a few months previously and we had been so happy and prosperous. Clarice, my young sister, was working in an excellent house of business. I was usher in a large and respectable middle-class school in Cardiganshire. The future therefore promised well for both. But in this life the moment of prosperity is like that delusive instant of profound calm that so often precedes a storm.

One terrible day fever broke out in the school. It had been such a happy day—a half-holiday spent in a ramble, and picnic in the woods. On calling over the names before returning home, two boys were missing; but soon the laggards came hurrying up, panting and breathless. They had been buying sweets in a neighbouring village. I should have reprimanded them, but noticing how flushed and heated they were, I withheld my rebuke. Thank God I did so, for that night the little fellows were delirious, and in spite of the tenderest nursing and the best advice the county could afford, died ere the unhappy parents could arrive in time to see their children still living. This was but the beginning of sorrows. The epidemic spread with unprecedented rapidity. The terrible outbreak—scarlet fever—speedily became typhoid, and not only decimated the pupils, but proved fatal to Dr. Wickens, the head master, and

his two children. From that moment the school was doomed and ruined. And not only the school itself, but every one connected with it, I amongst the rest, for what master would engage an usher from the ill-omened spot?

I had scarcely realized the peril of my own position ere I was summoned to the bedside of my sister, dangerously ill with rheumatic fever, brought on by over-work, over-heated rooms, and consequently sudden chills.

All my little savings speedily went in procuring for her the necessary food and medical advice so serious an illness required; and, needless to say, long before she was well our tiny store was exhausted. The kind woman in whose house we lodged was generously forbearing; but her very kindness made us distressed and ashamed of availing ourselves of it.

Much has been written on the subject, but few know the agonies endured in London, and probably in other large cities, by the friendless and respectable poor. Not only the agony of mental degradation, but the agony of bodily suffering. The want of food, the want of clothing, the want of fires or light, the burning desire to work, the hopelessness of obtaining any employment. In vain I sought the most humble. In vain did I go to every registry office; in vain did I call upon every agent. Gladly and thankfully would I have undertaken any work, however menial, could I have gained a few shillings a week. Not only did I suffer for myself and Clarice, but it gave my despairing heart another pang to see the crowd of poor, meanly-clad, half-starved creatures, mostly women, who thronged the doors of the lower class registry offices, like me hungry, weary, and well-nigh hopeless.

I had sold my watch. We had sold our spare clothes. Starvation seemed actually staring us in the face, when our landlady informed me that a cousin of hers, a fish-salesman near Billingsgate, required a temporary book-keeper. I started off instantly, with renewed hope; alas! the hope was but a shadow, if indeed it had any existence. If wanted at all, my services would not be required for another fortnight. Wearied, sick at heart, and weak from hunger, I turned homeward, looking from time to time into the shop-windows on the chance of finding that an errand boy was needed. Pausing a moment near one of the great thoroughfares, it occurred to me that by sacrificing my coat (my waistcoat had long departed) I might buy a broom, and so gain a few pence. But even this humble trade was

amply supplied. Every crossing had its proprietor—no vacancy even here.

Heedlessly I crossed the crowded roadway, but ere I could arrive at the pavement, a gentleman rushing in the opposite direction ran against me. I fell, almost beneath the wheels of a heavily laden omnibus, and must have been crushed beneath its weight, had not the same gentleman dragged me quickly aside.

"Hold up man," said he, "that was a narrow shave. Why, why its Jack! God bless me, its Jack Williams I declare! Why, dear old Jack, what on earth brings you here, entangling yourself amongst omnibuses, and getting yourself killed, like a Welsh sheep going to the slaughter? Dear old Jack, ain't I glad to see you! But come in here," he continued, pushing open the door of a neighbouring eating-house, "and let's have a brush and a chop."

Right glad was I to see my old friend and schoolfellow again, but I was pitiful-minded enough to be almost ashamed of thus meeting him. He, so fresh-looking and well dressed, evidently the prosperous City man, whilst I—but who does not know how seedy, shabby and haggard speedily becomes an unsuccessful, poverty-stricken being. Nevertheless Harry looked at me with the same honest affectionate eyes as of old. He set to work to help the waiter in brushing the mud from my well-worn coat, after having ordered more than a chop for luncheon.

Harry Seward and I had for many years been sworn friends at Shrewsbury. We had fought each other, aided each other in many a scrape, and loved each other as warm-hearted school-boys can love. But it was now many years since we had left that dear old school, and though we had parted with some choking sobs and heavy hearts, we had never met, and but seldom heard of each other since.

Not only was I ashamed of my shabby clothes, but I was ashamed of my fierce hunger. Harry seemed to take no notice of either, but he pressed me with questions, until he had learned most of my misfortunes. At length, though with a trembling voice and sinking heart, I gained sufficient courage to venture to ask him if he could help me to obtain some humble clerkship or other employment.

For some moments he did not reply, and I felt as if my very soul, as well as my head, were drooping, in the anguish of another despairing, indeed dying hope.

At length he looked up, and eagerly seized and wrung my hand.

"By Jove, dear old boy," he cried, "I verily believe a good Providence, or some stroke of luck, has made me light upon you this day! We're awfully in want just now of an honest man, an honest clerk, and from my soul, Jack, if there is such a thing as an honest man in this wicked world, I believe you're he. At any rate, I believe in you; but come to our house to-morrow morning and see my uncle. Ta, ta! I'm off, for I've lots to do."

Again he pressed my hand, said a few words to the waiter, paying, I found, for all, and was gone.

With a heart full of gratitude and thankfulness I hastened home to gladden my poor little Clarice with such good tidings.

The house of Messrs. Manuelson, Seward and Co., dealers in precious stones, was one of the most important firms of their class in the City, but nothing in the outward appearance of the establishment testified to the immense wealth it contained, nor how extensive were its dealings in every part of the world.

Situated at the end of a narrow court in one of the most secluded parts of the City, the sudden stillness that reigned in the little paved yard or court, after the noise and turmoil of the great streets, was absolutely startling. Tall handsome houses rose up on either side, once upon a time doubtless the habitations of great nobles, or princely merchants, now but warehouses for goods of which the bales were piled up on every floor, darkening the very windows by their huge bulk. The doors must have been on the other side, for none opened into Mynors Court save that belonging to the firm of Messrs. Manuelson. The silence, the dead stillness, seemed sepulchral, and with much trepidation I pushed open the swing door, on which a small brass plate revealed the name of the firm I sought. As I did so, a dark face, unmistakably Jewish in feature, looked out from a kind of porter's box, and motioned me to ascend the stairs.

A small bell hung beside a closed door, that opened the instant my trembling hand had caused a faint tinkle to be heard.

An aged clerk replied to the summons, and without speaking, led me through a narrow passage, through a small room in which there were a couple of clerks' desks and their accompanying high stools, into an inner sanctum.

On the rug before the fire stood a spare, middle-aged man, about sixty years of age apparently, though, as I found after-

wards, the exceeding pallor of his face and his slightly grizzled hair made him look older than he really was. It was a curious face, a face that attracted and interested me, and forced me to conjecture about his antecedents, even in a moment fraught to myself with so much personal anxiety. It was a face that had a history—a masterful face, a face of concentrated passions, and yet his manner was nervous and timid.

When he looked up hastily, as I was ushered into the room, his marvellously brilliant eyes were eager, nay, even fierce in their gaze of anxious enquiry. When the eyelids again drooped over them, a strangely abstracted timidity seemed to possess his whole person. He took up a paper knife from his desk, and played with it oddly for some seconds, as if his thoughts were far away from the trembling candidate, to whom his next words would be as life and death.

"My nephew tells me," said Mr. Manuelson, "that he has been well acquainted with you for some years. An unexpected calamity causes us to be in immediate need of a clerk, in whose probity and uprightness we can have confidence. It is scarcely necessary for me to say that in a business such as ours it is not usual to admit a stranger, but my nephew insists so strongly on your good qualities, speaks so confidently of you in every respect, that we are willing to give you a trial. You must bear in mind, however, that this is but a short and temporary engagement, and that I hold myself at liberty to dispense with your services at any moment. You can, I understand, commence your duties to-morrow. Good morning."

I bowed in grateful acquiescence, and at once withdrew.

"Ten o'clock," said the old clerk, as I passed through the outer office. "On the stroke, if you please."

I hastened home, and the happiness of Clarice and myself may be imagined.

I need hardly say that the following morning I was punctual to the moment, and in fact I waited in Mynors Court so as to obey my instructions exactly; and now began a life that to me was one of perfect happiness and content.

I loved my work. I fairly revelled in the quiet and restful employment.

Nothing had been said about salary, and when at the end of the week I received thirty shillings, I was fairly overwhelmed with gratitude and joy. Out of such a magnificent stipend we should speedily save enough to pay our kind landlady.

In addition to my own happiness I was soon much interested in the affairs of this important firm. Great, however, as was its business, but few persons appeared ostensibly engaged in it. Mr. Manuelson, Harry, the old clerk and myself were the only employes, and of these Harry was by no means regular in his attendance.

By degrees, as I became more and more initiated in the details of the business, I was absolutely amazed at the mighty nature of the transactions, at the enormous number and value of the jewels bought and sold, amazed too at the great financial operations carried on; but in these I had no part. None of these details were entrusted to me.

But by the jewels, eyes and thoughts were alike dazzled. Diamonds, rubies, emeralds, opals, pearls, every description of precious stone would at times come pouring in from all parts of the world, to be speedily dispersed amongst the principal jewellers in London, or despatched to Amsterdam, whence they would return resplendent from the skilful cutting of the famous lapidaries in that town, to be again instantly resold.

Of course in such a business, large and valuable consignments only arrived at intervals. Sometimes even long periods would elapse between the arrival of very valuable stones, a limited trade only going on in the meantime in jewels of less importance.

Necessarily there was considerable excitement when rare and costly gems were received, and after a time I could not help noticing that both the partners, and also the old clerk, became restless and uneasy on such occasions, sometimes to a degree that was painful to witness. Who could wonder, when such immense wealth was in the house, even for a few hours? I often wondered extra precautions were not taken, though I believe Harry often slept in Mynors Court; still it was not my place to speak.

I noticed, however, that when such consignments arrived, Harry never failed in his attendance in the counting-house. He often also urged the immediate despatch of the jewels, either to their purchasers, or to Amsterdam. Many times he would take them himself. He always appeared harassed and uneasy at any delay, although Mr. Manuelson, who was a far more skilful judge, would urge objections to such haste, pointing out flaws, or points that might be improved. But Harry would generally hotly oppose any delay, and would most times carry his point.

Harry was much with us, and was as affectionate and frank as ever on most subjects ; but he rarely spoke of his uncle, and I much feared there was distrust, or ill-feeling of some sort between the relatives. Rumour said, though I know not how the rumour reached me, that Mr. Manuelson had a most beautiful daughter, with whom Harry was madly in love, but that this love had been sternly and coldly repulsed, whether by father or daughter I knew not.

At any rate I grieved to see that my dear old friend had some burden on his heart. He was ill at ease, and his laugh, though merry and frequent, lacked the heart-cheerfulness of old days.

As for Clarice and myself, we were perfectly happy. We had more than enough for our simple requirements, and had not only paid off debts, but, with returning health and happiness, had in many small ways been able to show our gratitude to our kind landlady. Clarice made sundry gowns and frocks, and I taught the youngsters as much Latin and arithmetic as they could be induced to learn.

After a time, too, Mr. Manuelson extended his kind hospitality to me. We were much elated by such honour, but alas ! for me it for ever destroyed the calmness and peace of my quiet life. From the very instant I saw Lalagé Manuelson I fell hopelessly, overwhelmingly, madly in love. To say she was beautiful is feeble praise for the charm, the witchery of that exquisite face. Of what use to describe the perfection of the creamy, rose-tinted skin ; the richness of the dark, red-gold hair ; the glory of those great, soft, dewy eyes ; the sweetness of that tender mouth ? These were great gifts, no doubt, but it was the soul by which each feature was illumined, that seized mine with tyrant grasp, and kept it for ever enchained. And though the words of welcome were so smilingly as well as kindly said, there was a ring of melancholy in the tones of the sweet voice, there was a wistful look in the sweet eyes, that said some thorn, some pain rankled in that gentle heart. Then, jealous and keen-sighted from newly-awakened love, I noticed from time to time an anxious glance at Harry, which told me with an inexpressible pang that the pain she felt, whatever it might be, it was in some way connected with him.

I fought against my fate, I wrestled with it, and struggled hard to subdue it ; but then came another disquietude, apart, and yet in a measure akin to my own.

Harry was frequently with us. No doubt the friendship between us was real and strong, but after a time I began to think that he talked more to my delicate thoughtful sister than was necessary, or even prudent in our respective positions. I feared my little Clarice was getting more charmed with him than seemed good to me. She was forgetting that he was master, and we but his hired servants. Yet what could I do? My clerkship was life to us, so to neither Harry nor Clarice dared I say a word; but my heart was often hot and wrathful within me, when I thought of the rich and beautiful bride he was wooing in the luxurious villa at Roehampton, and noticed his low-toned speeches, and detected the earnest look he bestowed upon the humble girl in the poor lodgings at Islington.

Months passed, and I steadily laboured on, burying my own anxieties as best I might in the deep interest I felt in my duties.

The old clerk rarely spoke, but when he did, he told me trade was slack, slacker than it had been for many years, though to my inexperience the dealings of the firm appeared prodigious. Then as we grew more intimate he began to hint at troubles and anxieties that weighed upon him. At first I thought these anxieties must be connected with money, but by slow degrees words of curious import seemed to denote that darker causes, heavier even than monetary difficulties, weighed upon the old man's heart. It even occurred to me that once he wished to warn me, to caution me against something.

By this time I had learnt that odd stories clung about the old house of business; such tales as are not uncommon even in the prosaic, commercial City of London. But the curious contrasts presented by the really overpowering traffic and business of the main thoroughfares, and the almost equally overpowering silence and gloom of many hidden squares and courts, such as those in which our firm was situated, combined also with the solemn silence of the whole City on the Sunday, were quite enough to excite nervous and susceptible minds, and I found more ghost stories, more ghastly histories of appalling and secret crimes hung about many of the ancient houses than in my country experience I should have thought possible. At last it came out that the very house we were in had an especially evil name. Not only had unaccountable robberies taken place in it, but many years ago it had been the scene of a far more terrible crime. Robbery then had been attended by murder. A confidential clerk had been found hideously gashed and dead, lying

near the safe in which jewels of great value had been deposited. Needless to say, the jewels had disappeared. Strenuous efforts had been made to discover the murderer or murderers, but without avail. Many years elapsed, and though there were repeated whispers that burglarious attempts had been made upon the valuable property, nothing was known for certain. No accusations were made, and if jewels had been stolen, the matter was hushed up. It was easy to understand that such great dealers did not wish it to be supposed their premises were unsafe. At length another remarkable and apparently dreadful crime startled the whole district in which the great house of Manuelson was situated. The murder, if murder there had been, must have been committed in broad daylight, on a summer's afternoon. The hour for closing had arrived. The porter asserted he had left the house but for a few minutes to take a message to a neighbouring warehouse. No sound had been heard. Mr. Manuelson and the old clerk had left the house together. Before their departure they had seen that all had been carefully closed and locked. The junior clerk, the resident carekeeper, had as usual been left in charge. When the porter returned he found the place in the direst confusion. A fearful struggle had evidently taken place. Furniture had been hurled in every direction, much of it broken to pieces, a heavy poker was absolutely twisted out of shape, from the violence of the blows it had dealt. It was also deeply stained with blood, and amidst the clots were bits of hair, human hair. Other ghastly traces of the hideous struggle were staining furniture, walls and floor, a great pool showing where the death-blow had been given. It was even supposed the body of the dead man must have been dragged across the room. Jewels of immense value had been stolen, but no trace could be discovered either of the murderer, or of the victim. Was the wretched clerk the victim? The excitement, the anger, nay the terror of the neighbourhood may be imagined. That such a crime could be committed in broad daylight in the midst of London shook the whole community to its very centre.

The murderer must and should be discovered. The police were tormented, and badgered into even double energy. Government at length offered £100 reward to any accomplice, not the actual murderer, who would turn Queen's evidence, and secure the conviction of such an atrocious villain. Mr. Manuelson supplemented this reward by one still larger, £500. Surely so great a sum would tempt a needy man?

But no, the murderer must have been alone in his bloody work. Not a sign was given, nor was rumour even aroused, until it was suggested that the unhappy clerk was the guilty man. At last it came to be believed that he had resisted the burglar's attack, then, seized with terror at the dreadful deed he had perhaps committed, tempted by the riches now in his power, he had succumbed to fear and cupidity, and had eventually fled, taking the jewels with him. There was a certain amount of possibility about this story, but it was never confirmed, nor was anything ever proved. However, up to this time the clerk had not been heard of. The only evidence that was ever adduced, if evidence it can be called, was the assertion of some children, who had followed a rolling ball into the court. They declared they had heard a loud cry, and then suddenly a dreadful face appeared at one of the windows of the house at the end of the court. This face was so terrible, they had thought it was the Devil himself. The children were too terrified to wait to hear or see more, they ran away instantly, and said nothing for some time, as they had been forbidden to play in the court. This dreadful incident was the cause of my obtaining the vacant desk. The then porter had retired, and the man I had seen on my arrival filled his post. We were such a small party and so uncommunicative, that I long remained in ignorance of these shocking histories. But had I known them, they would have made no difference to me. I was thankful and grateful for the chance or rather kind friendship that had procured me such lucrative and honourable employment.

I was beginning to feel settled, really to belong to the place, when one Saturday afternoon I was summoned to Mr. Manuelson. Never since the eventful day when I received the appointment had I been called to the inner sanctum, sacred to the head of the firm; and my heart beat quickly with anxious fear as I came into the presence of my master. He was standing, playing with the paper-knife, and it really increased my own tremor to see how pale and agitated he was. He seemed unwilling, almost unable, to speak, and looked at me with such a pained expression on his kind face, that I felt assured he was reluctant to give me the distress of dismissal.

I waited in trembling expectation for the fatal fiat.

"Mr. Williams," he said at last, after some instants of this painful and embarrassing silence. "Mr. Williams," he repeated, "you were only engaged, if you remember, as temporary clerk."

I bowed in sorrowful acquiescence ; but I felt, in spite of my efforts for courage, how pale I was becoming. God help my poor Clarice, my poor little sister, still so weak and languid from her illness !

"But," continued the head partner, making as it were a violent effort over himself, "we have been much pleased with your diligence, and the apt way in which you have made yourself acquainted with our somewhat complicated business. We have therefore decided to offer you a more permanent engagement, at a yearly and an increasing salary, provided you will undertake the duties of caretaker, and live in these premises. I do not conceal from you that this is an anxious, as well as an onerous position ; but it will prove to you, I think, how well disposed we are to put confidence in your integrity, as well as in your ability."

I was fairly overwhelmed with joy and gratitude. I was barely able to murmur a few words of grateful thanks, but as I did so, the words seemed as if strangled in my throat. I stammered and hesitated, for sudden remembrance of the ghastly tales I had so lately heard flashed upon my brain, and an inexplicable feeling of repulsion overcame my delight.

Happily, Mr. Manuelson had not noticed my momentary and childish hesitation. He took it for granted I should accept so liberal and advantageous an offer.

"Your salary," he continued, "is for your clerkship. Your residence here includes board, lodging, and all necessary extras. I trust you will find the rooms allotted to you sufficiently comfortable."

Was my good angel whispering to me when a thought occurred, that I at once uttered aloud ?

"My sister, sir," said I falteringly ; "I have a young sister who always lives with me."

Mr. Manuelson hesitated a minute, then he looked at me with thoughtful sympathy.

"A sister, you have a young sister," he said kindly ; "well, well, I have no objection, though this is but a lonely place for a young woman. However, if you wish to be together I do not object. Let her come ; but," he added, turning quickly to me, "no servants, no women-servants. It is a *sine quâ non* there should be no servants here. The porter will do whatever service you require."

This kind and considerate consent completed the sum of my

happiness, and I hurried home again to tell Clarice of our good fortune.

Within a fortnight we were established in our new abode, and most charmed we both were. The rooms were thoroughly comfortable, furnished with plenty of old-fashioned furniture, and it was a constant pleasure to examine the curious old writing-tables and cabinets, and especially to explore the odd cupboards that were to be found in every nook and corner. Many of these cupboards were quite full of Eastern china or of broken and decaying furniture, and we promised ourselves much future amusement in arranging and mending such a multitude of curious and possibly valuable articles. There was only one circumstance in the whole affair that gave us pain. The evident displeasure of Harry. He made no secret of his disapproval, or how much he objected to our being established in the house. He but once, however, spoke to me on the matter, and the expressions he used were so painful, that under other circumstances they would have caused the severance of our friendship. I felt it, however, my duty to endeavour adequately to fill the place, and I trusted to time, that healer of all unhappy feelings, to alter his views on the subject.

However, for some weeks we saw but little of him. He went off to Amsterdam taking with him some valuable stones, and from certain expressions of Mr. Manuelson's and the old clerk, his absence appeared to have been unnecessarily prolonged. Shortly after his return, either from this delay or from other causes, he had a stormy interview with his uncle, and we could not forbear hearing that several angry words passed between them.

And now another change occurred in our quiet life. Ever since we had been settled in Mynors Court, Mr. Manuelson's kindness had been unceasing. He seemed never to weary of doing all he could to make Clarice and myself not only contented but happy. Day by day my gratitude to him, my admiration of him, grew stronger and stronger, and I felt that never would it be in my humble power to show how keen was my appreciation of his generous goodness.

He really appeared to like us, for by degrees he fell into the habit of coming to our room when business was over, and having tea with us. Perceiving, also, how delicate Clarice still was, he at last rarely failed to bring her each day a basket of fine fruit or beautiful flowers, and, like another flower, the poor child

revived in the sunshine of such kindness, and once more showed traces of her former bright cheerfulness.

I sometimes felt nervous, fearing she might be thought presuming, but her merry chatter evidently amused and interested our kind master. Mr. Manuelson was himself a man of such extensive information, and of such varied experience, that his companionship was an actual luxury, of which I especially appreciated the charm.

I hardly know how it was, but one afternoon it came upon me with a shock quite dreadful from its intensity, that the feeling our master entertained for Clarice was not that of a kind and elderly friend, but that it was the ardent, overpowering love a middle-aged man sometimes feels when he allows himself to fall in love with a woman much younger than himself. A feeling verily alarming in its intensity, and deeply distressing to the friends around, should it not be returned.

Such things may be, such things have been, but it is rare to find that a girl of eighteen can be honestly in love with a man of sixty. The one motive that leads her to endeavour to return such affection must in most cases be self-interest.

On the day in question it happened that Clarice had a return of the old fever, and Mr. Manuelson's alarm at her indisposition, his distress at her sufferings, were so evident, that my eyes were suddenly and painfully opened. Yes, painfully, because to encourage such a sentiment would be disloyal to those to whom I owed and felt such an infinite debt of gratitude.

What would Harry think of such an unsuitable union? What would not be the pain experienced by Miss Manuelson? Then I felt assured, from various trifling circumstances, that if my little Clarice cared for any one, it was for Harry.

Could I urge her, could I indeed allow her to be such a traitor to her own heart, even to our generous benefactor, as to become his wife without loving him as a wife should love her husband? No, a thousand times no! But what ought I, what could I do? Day and night this painful question was before me. I became silent, I felt I was becoming almost morose in my anxious and irresolute disquietude.

Time passed and I was still undecided as to what ought to be my proper course of action, when the firm was aroused into sudden activity by large orders for magnificent jewels that would be needed for some royal wedding. Stones of immense value would be required, and telegrams in cypher were incessantly

despatched to our foreign correspondents, to urge that every exertion should be made to obtain any that were of exceptional size and value.

In a short time numerous consignments arrived, and I was almost scared at the sight of the wondrous amount of wealth that was confided to us. At length some extraordinarily magnificent diamonds arrived, and were the cause unfortunately of a stormy debate between Harry and his uncle, as to whether the former ought not to start that same night for Amsterdam, in order that no time should be lost in placing some of the gems in the hands of the lapidaries of that town—Mr. Manuelson pointing out several points that might be improved.

Harry came to see us that evening, and was kinder and more himself than he had been for a long time.

Clarice timidly asked if he were really going to Holland that night.

"No, I am not," he said sharply and resolutely. "I am decidedly not going."

"But surely Mr. Manuelson made a point of having those diamonds cut as speedily as possible?" I ventured to say.

"Perhaps he did," was the somewhat curt answer; "but nevertheless I am not going—I've my own affairs to attend to."

"But indeed, Harry," I urged, "would it not be better to attend to your uncle's wishes. Forgive me for saying it would be satisfactory to have these diamonds sent as speedily as possible to their destinations. I, for one, feel nervous at such an amount of wealth being under the roof. Surely, surely when one remembers—" here I stammered and broke off awkwardly. Harry changed colour, seemed about to speak, but remained silent, and evidently avoided looking at me.

"Indeed, Harry," I ventured to continue, although I could not help feeling ashamed at such a tacit admission of cowardice, "it does seem to me that it would be advisable to have some other man here besides myself, as long as such valuable jewels remain in the house."

"A good thought," he said, "a very good thought. I'll come," and he looked at Clarice with an eager anxiety I did not like.

"Good-bye, Miss Williams," he said a few minutes afterwards, "good-bye for the present." Then turning to me, "Look out for me about nine, Jack; I'll come."

"You will speak to Mr. Manuelson about it," I said, somewhat

reluctantly ; "my orders are so precise, that no one under any pretence is to be admitted after nightfall."

"I'll see about that," he said, and so left us. The jewels were not under my immediate care. I did not even know in which safe they had been deposited. I did not even know whether they were here at all, or packed and placed elsewhere ready for transmission to Amsterdam.

But somehow that night I was ill at ease.

Besides the continued worry of my anxieties, I had not been well for some days. The close, thundery weather affected me, and I missed my daily walks from and to Islington.

Necessarily here I got but little exercise. I could never be long absent. Occasionally Clarice and I would walk, or go on the top of an omnibus towards some suburb, and get our dinner on the banks of the river, or in as much country air as our limited time would permit. Often my leave was extended, always if I asked, for nothing could exceed the kindness and consideration with which we were treated. But I did not like to ask often, and somehow I was neither as well nor as happy as I ought to have been.

Perhaps it was this absence of sufficient exercise, perhaps I allowed my personal anxieties to prey too much upon my mind, but I became nervous, distressingly so, and I am almost ashamed to say that the ugly stories I had heard about the house now painfully impressed my imagination. I began to fancy I heard odd noises. I disliked the dark. I hesitated to open some of the queer spider-haunted cupboards. In short, my nerves were shaken, and at last I suffered much from a degree of sleeplessness that almost amounted to insomnia.

On the night in question I was much worried. I could not make up my mind whether I ought to admit Harry or not.

The orders I had received from Mr. Manuelson were very explicit, and yet Harry was a partner ; but many things had occurred to make me anxious, even unhappy, about my poor, kind Harry. It had accidentally come to my knowledge that he was in debt, very heavily in debt. He had altered of late. Besides the anger he had displayed at my nomination as caretaker, he had become moody, irritable, and prone to take offence at the merest trifle.

Sometimes I thought his affections wavered between Miss Manuelson and poor Clarice, and that he was unable to decide not only what he ought, but what he wished to do.

As to his admission to-night, I must be guided by circumstances. At any rate, everything should be securely fastened long ere nine o'clock arrived.

Twice I had gone round to every door, every window, every possible outlet. The porter's lodge was cut off from our part of the house by an iron door. In fact every door, every shutter, was plated with iron, no citadel could be better guarded. Everything seemed secure, and yet there was upon me to-night a sensation of peril at hand, a prevision of insecurity and danger against which I felt unable to struggle.

The City had long been silent. Quiet as was our court, still from the great thoroughfares hard by came the constant rattle of passing cabs, the heavy roll of omnibuses and carts, the ceaseless tread of innumerable feet. All day long this mighty, though distant, noise was heard; but at nightfall stillness fell upon the great City, stillness, weird and deathlike from its unnatural quiet, unearthly from the complete cessation of every pulsation of life.

To-night the quiet was more absolute, more trying than it had ever been. The faint nibble of a hungry mouse made Clarice start, as she was going the rounds with me; and when I laughed at her foolish terror, my laugh sounded in my ears like the forced mirth of a fool on the stage, and it seemed to my distorted fancy as if *I* had not spoken, but that some sinister being had borrowed my voice and words.

Nine o'clock passed, ten o'clock passed; Clarice had gone to bed, and when the great bell of St. Paul's boomed forth the hour of eleven, I was preparing to do the same, when I heard Harry's voice at our sitting-room door, asking in a low tone for admittance. I hesitated for a moment; but on his repeating his demand, I felt I was not justified in refusing entrance to a partner. I unbarred the door and let him in.

He almost fell as he entered, so great was his agitation; and, sinking into the nearest chair, remained for some seconds speechless, almost breathless. His dress was in disorder, his hair dishevelled, face and lips alike pallid with a deathly pallor.

"Good God, Hal!" I cried; "what's the matter? You've not—surely you've not been drinking, and got into a row?"

"Would to Heaven it were so, Jack! Would to God I were mad or drunk! Jack, as you love your sister, go from here this instant, and take your sister away."

"Go?—I can't go! You know I cannot!"

"You must—you shall! That poor innocent girl must not, and shall not remain here!"

"Hal," I said, shaking him even violently in the agony of distress I felt, "you must be mad or drunk. What sane man would dare to suggest to me to leave my trust; to leave it in the dead of night, and at such an important, even critical moment? Don't you know," I continued, almost hissing my words into his ear, "that it was at just such a crisis as this that the last atrocious crime was committed in this very house—for aught I know, in this very room? Blood has been shed here to protect or to steal such wretched baubles. Just Heaven, to what crimes are not men tempted by the mere sight of these miserable glittering stones!"

"To what crimes are not men tempted," muttered Harry, gazing at me with wide-open, almost lack-lustre eyes. "That is it, Jack; no one knows the temptation until he is tried. It is a madness, a hideous madness. Pray not to be led into temptation. Jack, dear old Jack! come away. As you love your poor little sister, as you love me, as you love yourself, come away at once. Leave this accursed spot without a moment's delay—without a moment's delay, I say. By Heavens! it may be even now too late!"

"Harry," I returned, grasping him firmly by the arm, "this won't do, you know. You can't suppose I'm to be tempted away from this house, from my duty, by such mad talk as this. What do you take me for, if you think I am to be imposed upon by such bosh as this? Do you suppose I am going to turn craven and scoundrel because you are mad, or frightened by some danger of which you refuse to tell me? The more danger there may be, the more clearly it is my duty to be here to face it; the more distinctly it is my duty to guard the property entrusted to my charge. I am certain you did not expect I should be such a cur as to leave my post. You did not, you could not expect it. But, my poor Hal, you are not well. Go home and get to bed. I say go—but how you got into the house I cannot imagine."

"I did not get in," he said gloomily. "I hid here."

"Hid here," I repeated incredulously. "Where, in the name of wonder? There is not a closet, nor a cupboard here that I do not know."

"So you think," he replied; "that just shows how little you do know."

"But if you could not get in," I continued, "how do you mean to get away?"

"By the window; and if you mean to save your sister's life and reason, you'll help her to get out of the window with me."

"My poor Hal," I said, half laughing, "your anxiety for us has almost turned your brain. You don't suppose I'm going to help my sister to get out of the window, and go away with you at this time of night?"

He made no reply, but began pacing up and down the room, every now and then stopping to listen to some sound, imaginary it seemed to me, for I heard nothing, then looking hurriedly around with a shuddering glance, as if he feared to see some horrid sight in the queer-shaped dusky corner of the room.

I bore his restlessness patiently for some time. At length sheer weariness overcame me.

"Well, Hal," I said at last, "you must either get out of the window and go home, or else go to sleep upon this sofa, for I'm off to bed."

"I'll stay here, if you'll allow me," he returned; and by the tone of his voice I perceived he would be relieved by my absence.

I left him, but I did not go to bed. I was much too uneasy, too anxious. Harry's condition alarmed me. There was something cruelly wrong. My dear generous Harry was in a perilous condition; either his mind was threatened, or the valuable property in which he had so large an interest was endangered. Many times during the night I fancied there were curious noises, unaccountable creakings, even voices sounded in my ears. Once or twice I went to look, but I was so over-excited, so uneasy, and yet so distressingly tired, I could not be assured whether these noises were real or imaginary.

I watched until the chill miserable dawn of a thoroughly wet day began to creep dismally in through the interstices of the shuttered windows.

Harry then ceased his restless walk, looked at his watch, and with an exclamation of relief, opened the window, and grasping a water-pipe that was near it, slid rapidly to the ground, and in another moment was out of sight.

Tired as I was, I got but little sleep during the few hours of rest that remained to me, and when I went to my desk in the morning I was fairly unhinged. So unwell, so harassed did I seem, that Mr. Manuelson kindly noticed my disquietude. I

ascribed it to anxiety about my sister, who was still far from well.

Mr. Manuelson expressed his regret, but did not pursue the subject. However, in about an hour he sent for me.

"It will give my daughter great pleasure if your sister will spend a few days with her at Roehampton. I sent a telegram, and have just received the answer. You had better take Miss Williams there as early this afternoon as may suit the young lady's convenience. It will be but a quiet visit, my daughter being alone. My nephew left for Amsterdam early this morning, and business may perhaps detain me in London.

I was very disinclined for this visit, but there was no help for it. I could only bow my thanks and inform Clarice of the honour destined for her. To my astonishment, I found her tearful and unwilling to go. She so loved the country, that I was amazed at her reluctance, and could only ascribe it to excess of shyness.

I endeavoured to reassure her by reminding her how gentle and friendly Miss Manuelson was, but in vain. The poor child was nervous and unwilling to leave me. She clung to me in painful agitation.

"It's ungrateful, I know," she sobbed, "when we are so comfortable and happy, and it's such a piece of luck to have a home like this, but I really do wish we were not here. I'm now always in a fright; and do you know, Jack," she half-whispered, looking round with shuddering terror, "I am sure that last night some one looked in."

"Looked in," I said, "looked in where?"

"In your room, Jack," she replied, speaking yet lower than before, "from some hole in that little corner near your bed. I was making your clothes tidy, and looking up suddenly, I saw some one staring at me. Such awful eyes, Jack, oh! such awful eyes. I think if they looked at me again I should die. Oh, Jack! dear, dear Jack! come away with me far from here! I cannot leave you with those eyes near you, close to your bed."

"Upon my word, Clarice," I said almost angrily, "I really think you and Harry Seward must both be mad to urge me to go away. You must know I neither can nor will."

"Did Harry, did Mr. Seward also want you to go?" said Clarice, becoming if possible still paler than before.

"Now, Clarice," said I, decidedly, in that tone which always told the docile child I meant to be obeyed, "we will not talk

any more of such follies. You will get ready at once, and I will take you to Roehampton. I will speak to Mr. Manuelson later about these corners and holes in the room that frighten your weak little head."

I took Clarice to Roehampton, where she was received with infinite kindness. I longed to remain there, but I hastened back to Mynors Court. I was disquieted. I was anxious. Several projects had occurred to me, but I had now made up my mind as to what I intended to do. My suspicions turned upon the porter. I did not like his face, nor in fact his ways. I was certain he was often absent at undue hours, and if he or one of his accomplices did not know something respecting the last terrible business I was much mistaken, and did him grievous wrong. I would return, but he should not know I had returned.

Harry's sudden and unprepared departure also astonished and disturbed me. Never before had he left without certain documents and papers, many of which had been written or copied by me. In thinking over the events of the previous night, it had occurred to me that if he could get out by that water-pipe, I ought to be able to get in by its aid.

Is there a Welsh boy who does not pride himself upon being an agile and rapid climber? No foretopman could swarm up a mast or pole with more ease and rapidity than I. Silently and swiftly I entered the little square, whose ancient trees threw a dark shadow over the back of our house. Not a window opened upon that side save the windows of our few rooms. I was really amazed how unprotected was this portion of the house, for in less time than I take to relate it, I had climbed the pipe, and with its aid, and that of a few worn bricks, stood safely in our room.

All was still, and a deeper feeling of depression and gloom came over me than I had ever before experienced as I traversed the silent chambers. The cheerful companionship of my little sister had hitherto prevented my appreciating how sombre, how dreary they were.

The intense quiet was really dreadful to me. I would gladly have sought the companionship of the porter, but for the suspicions I entertained of him. As things were, it was another element of anxiety, that he and I were now alone in the ill-omened house.

I lighted neither candle nor lamp, but whilst the twilight lasted, I carefully examined a purchase I had made when

returning from Roehampton, a six-chambered revolver. I was so convinced some attempt would be made to-night, that I even laid the poker near my hand.

It is my firm belief that in most cases Nature warns her children when peril is nigh. Birds and animals alike have prescience of the coming danger, and seek shelter and safety from the storm or earthquake, while there is yet time.

Man alone neglects or despises the loving caution. Would not many lives have been saved had that silent voice been heeded, a voice that warns when death is stalking near? We pay no heed, but in how many instances has not an inner consciousness revealed, that a bloody weapon was suspended, perhaps by a single hair, above the doomed and careless head!

This warning consciousness was upon me to-night, and every nerve and sense seemed strained to distressing acuteness. But as hours slowly passed away, imagination began to play her usual tricks. Sounds apparently issued from corners whence no sounds could come. Gibbering voices whispered in my ear, and watchful, savage eyes glared at me from out the black darkness, that shrouded me as if in a tomb.

I felt at last as if some movement would be speedily a necessity. The dead silence, the dead blackness were intolerable. I lost count of time, perhaps I slept. I know not, but suddenly a conviction came upon me that I was not alone. Who it was that had entered, or whence that some one had come, I could not tell, but that there was some presence in the room I had no doubt. The instant this certainty came to me, I was myself again. All superstitious tremors vanished, when the need for watchfulness and action arrived. At this moment, a ray from the rising moon shot through the trees, and fell full upon the bed of my room, the room in which I was.

Great Heaven! a narrow aperture, a door or shutter was open in the wall, close to the head of the bed. A dark, shadowy, undefined figure was standing or leaning over it, half shrouded by the curtain. An arm protruded from the shadow, holding a small pillow or thick cloth; I could not distinguish which. A pungent but sickly odour filled the room. A moment's pause, and then the cloth was hurriedly placed where my head would have been, had I been sleeping there. The bed-clothes were drawn over it, and pressed closely down. The arm was withdrawn, and without sound the aperture closed.

All was as before, save that the atmosphere was heavy with

the powerful anæsthetic. It even weighed upon my own faculties, although seated in a distant chair.

For the inmate of that bed, (had there been one) insensibility, if not death would speedily ensue.

It required an effort to shake myself free from the noxious influence, from the hideous certainty of the fate that had been intended for me. Perhaps even, notwithstanding the imminence of the peril, I should have succumbed to the heavy sleepiness I felt, had I not heard a slight, a very slight noise in the adjoining room. It was but a click, so faint that probably it would have been unheard by ears less keenly sensitive than mine now were.

But in this next room were the wonderful safes, marvels of strength and cunning workmanship, to whose secure keeping the precious jewels were confided.

How any one could have accomplished an entrance into this room was a mystery. The only entry possible after nightfall was through my room. This faint click meant that one of the safe locks was being opened, and by a special and peculiar key.

The partners alone had keys, and here my heart stopped beating. I was absolutely paralysed with horror, with terror, as a hideous suspicion, a hideous fear came before me.

Mr. Manuelson had a key, and Harry . . . Harry had one

An infinite dread, an infinite pity overwhelmed me. What must have been his temptation, his infatuation, his madness, ere he could have sunk to this! To stupefy, if not to murder his old comrade, the friend to whom he had been so kind, to rob his near relative, his partner!! Could such insanity, could such degradation be possible?

Tears of bitter shame for him, tears of bitter grief seemed to be wrung from my very heart.

But I would save him. Save him despite himself. Save him from himself. I grasped my pistol as I thought on this.

Yes, I would use it if needs be. Use it to wound, and save the friend I loved so well, to whom I owed so much. And then, if my shot were fatal, I should yet have another barrel, with which to end my own miserable life, and so die with the man I knew was even at this dreadful moment so infinitely dear to me.

Gently I stole into the room.

Yes, there stood Harry. I knew his figure, I knew his coat, the pale moonlight showed me enough.

The safe was open, and he was greedily clutching the cases

that contained the most magnificent of the gems. He was stooping forward, gazing at them with frightful eagerness; forgetful even of danger, for I heard a low sigh of satisfaction; but I hardly saw all this, for in an instant I had thrown myself violently upon him. I hurled him to the ground, falling myself heavily as I did so. But in another second, with the cry of a wild beast, with the agility of a cat he had risen, and with the grasp of a vice had seized me by the throat. The great slouched hat fell off, a wicked grinning face was close to mine, hideous, blood-thirsty eyes glared at me with deadly hate, murderous hands pressed upon my throat. My life was at the mercy of a fiend, but thank God, thank God, it was not Harry! Even in that awful moment, that one thought filled my heart.

Against Harry I should have been powerless to struggle much. Now an unearthly strength seemed given me, and with a fury equal to, even exceeding that of my assailant, I seized him in a still more deadly gripe.

With a sudden wrench I freed an arm, my finger was on the trigger of the revolver, when my hand was dashed upwards, and Harry's voice cried:

"Jack, Jack, for God's sake, don't fire!" I staggered back; in doing so the pistol went off, and the burglar fell to the ground; but Harry's voice still rung in my ears, and a figure brushed hastily by me.

"My God, Jack! what have you done!" cried Harry as he stooped over the fallen man, whom he raised and placed in the nearest chair. Hastily he brought a light, whilst I stood by in dull, stupid inaction. The figure was that of Harry, but the hideous, revolting face was unknown to me. Suddenly the hands moved as if convulsively, but with an action that was too dreadfully familiar. Then ere we could do aught to prevent it, the miserable wretch drew a short sharp knife from his pocket plunged it into his throat below the ear, and with frightful strength and resolution inflicted upon himself a long and ghastly wound.

"My poor Jack, why did I not confide in you? Why did I not trust you with the hateful secret?" said Harry, as he busied himself with the wounded man, endeavouring to stanch the wound. "Thank Heaven, it is not deep!" he continued. "When the dreadful temptation comes; when he is in this state, he does not know what he does, and generous, good and kind as he is at other times, in these accursed moments he becomes, God

help him!—thief, murderer. Nothing checks his mad desire, but in truth he is not then accountable for his actions. I know I ought to have warned you; but both he and poor Lalagé had sworn me to silence, and I trusted by careful watching, and by always being here at critical and perilous times to keep off any immediate danger. For the last two years, however, the mischief has been perceptibly gaining ground, and I have scarcely known an easy moment. He had promised Lalagé and me to retire this summer. Then these miserable diamonds arrived, and their unusual value aroused all the demon within him to fresh life. I have been hidden in this house, Jack, ever since they came. We had to bribe that last clerk to hold his tongue, with a sum that will cripple us for years. But I knew, Jack, that you would be true and sure; and didn't I thank God I came across you that day!

"But I ought to have told you. I ought to have told you, and then to-night I was so worn-out and sleepy. I declare the place seems full of chloroform. Why, Jack, Jack——" The poor fellow said no more, but I knew what he thought, and I never told him whence the chloroform came, and for what purpose.

By this time Harry, with my assistance, had conveyed the miserable man, who had fainted from loss of blood, to the bed. Harry, who seemed a thorough surgeon both in knowledge and skill, had already closed the wound in the throat, which, though ugly to look at, was superficial and not dangerous; he then proceeded to ascertain the extent of the bullet-wound. There was but one, and to my inexperienced eyes it did not appear serious; but I perceived Harry's face darken more and more as he bent over and closely examined a tiny, bluish-looking hole immediately over the right lung.

The examination ended, he did not speak, but tenderly drew the shirt again over the chest of the unhappy man. His silence and this action told me everything. There was nothing to be done,

He signed to me to accompany him outside the door.

"Send the porter for Mr. Waine," he said; "we had better have him here. Then come back to me, Jack," he added compassionately. "You can help me. Don't fret, Jack," he went on kindly, "it is better so. I always knew it would come to this some day. Better it should be so, by mere accident, than by his own hand, or even worse."

When I returned, it was my friend and master who was lying

on the bed. The mask or paint had been removed. I no longer saw the hideous midnight burglar and assassin with whom I had had the deadly struggle. God knows, my heart was sore within me, and I would have given many years of my own life to have restored life and sanity to him, whose days had been shortened by my wretched hand.

Mr. Waine came, but could do nothing. There was nothing to be done. He was evidently a discreet man, and did not ask for many explanations. There had been an alarm of burglars, an unfounded alarm. Mr. Waine had long known Mr. Manuelson, who had ever been a generous benefactor to the poor, and who had given away large sums to the sick and suffering by the hand of this kindly doctor.

As life ebbed, consciousness returned, and then came dreadful horror, anguish, and remorse, although through it all still struggled the miserable passion that had driven a generous, indeed an honourable man into crimes of the blackest, the most hideous atrocity. The shrieks of terrified remorse, the wild howls of an awful and longing cupidity, and the terror-stricken recitals of scenes of horror were accompanied by the ceaseless moans and cries of suffering humanity.

Once or twice, in moments of returning reason, he murmured the name Lalagé.

Harry looked at me enquiringly.

I shook my head. "God forbid!" I said hurriedly; "to one like her such a scene would be worse than death. She could bring but little comfort, and her life would be blasted by such a sight."

Long did the death-struggle last, but mercifully before the end came reason, and with it comparative peace returned. Yet, wonderful to say, reason and peace were accompanied with total oblivion of every painful or dreadful circumstance. He thought he had been wounded in a struggle to save *my* life.

"God bless you, my dear boy," he said to me, feebly pressing my hand. "I am indeed thankful to have been the means of saving your young life. You will be a worthy help and partner to my dear Hal here. I should have been glad to have been spared a few more years as a make-weight to such young heads. Don't speculate, my dear boys, and don't love gold too much;" but as he spoke, a lurid fire returned to the darkening eyes, and, in spite of the failing voice, he whispered with horrible eagerness, "Harry, Harry, we *must* keep those

diamonds, I cannot let them go. Draw near, lad, nearer still ; blood, blood *must* be shed for those wondrous gems. How they glitter ! How they drag me towards them ! I have them near, and yet I cannot hold them. Give them to me, fellow, or you shall die ; die, I say ! ” and with a wild cry, he fought the air, as if to strike and seize his prey.

It was an awful and dreadful sight. The strong, and otherwise good man wrestling in the throes of his overwhelming temptation. The demon had entered into him, and was tearing at his soul with deadly force.

Who will dare say that seven evil spirits, more wicked than the first, do not enter into the heart of a man who has ever allowed a vile and covetous passion to take root there ? Then do those evil spirits usurp sway over every thought, over every once holy inclination, until at last they tear and rend their miserable victim, tormenting him with the longings of Tantalus, burying every generous aspiration beneath a direful necessity of gratifying some selfish longing,—at length destroying others, and finally himself, in the vain attempt to obtain some coveted object, only to discover that the worthless thing so passionately longed for is but dust and ashes.

Alas, for poor humanity ! we are at best only weak, dual creatures, filled perhaps with noble desires, having often glorious aspirations after deeds of generous unselfishness, but for ever fighting, and too often worsted in the constant and terrible conflict with the evil spirit that lies hidden in the heart of man, mocking at all that is good and holy, urging ever to the selfish and miserable gratification of mean and degrading passions.

At last, and words cannot say with what gratitude we watched the change, the deadly fight betwixt good and evil was over.

The wicked world with all its sad longings was passing away, and the loving father, the generous benefactor, thought only of those whom he so speedily should be forced to leave.

To me was deputed the sorrowful duty of bringing the stricken daughter to the bedside of her dying father. So cruel a task well-nigh broke my heart, for I could not, I dare not say the words of loving comfort my very soul longed to give. Clarice's simple, girlish sympathy was of more avail.

In the arms of his child the sinful man breathed his last, and never has she heard the true history of that blackened soul.

* * * * *

Three years have passed away. The firm in Mynors Court

is now that of Manuelson, Seward, and Williams. A little Jack, and a tiny babe who is to bear the name of Lalagé, now bless the home of Harry and Clarice.

The villa at Roehampton has long been closed, for its young mistress has been travelling abroad. It was only yesterday we learnt she had at length returned.

For the last year few have been the days when I have not ridden down to Roehampton to gaze at the closed windows with a longing, that I was aware was almost akin to madness. The summer wind that whispered amidst the great trees of the garden, seemed to my eager heart as the sound of that sweet voice; the perfume of the flowers was but a reminder of her sweet presence, their glowing beauty but a faint reflex of the loveliness of their fair owner.

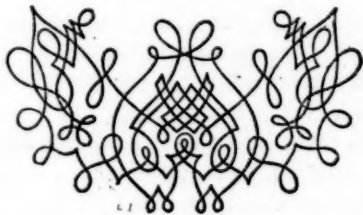
When I first heard of her arrival I felt I *must* go to her instantly. I even rang to order my horse to be brought round; but the very act brought wisdom, and then after a few hours' reflection, my heart misgave me. I dared not go. I dared not venture into that beloved presence.

For twenty-four hours I have been racked by tortures of indecision, but I am now resolved. It is four o'clock, ere another hour will have passed, I shall be on my way to *her*.

Has not some great writer said: "Well-founded hope gives man his happiest moment"?

It may be so; therefore, farewell!

ANDRÉE HOPE.



Cruel May!*

TO THE LADY M—— H——

OH when will come that breath of Spring
 Through which the dawn beams play,
 The breeze which gracious hours should bring
 To the right sort of May?
 We long for it, night after night,
 Each morn in hope we rise,
 Only to feel the bitter blight,
 And watch the sullen skies.

The breeze I mean, now swift, now slow,
 Dancing across the day,
 Still flutters, whether loud or low,
 Soft, buoyant, fresh and gay.
 Each blossom over which she floats
 Leaps forth in loving rush,
 She fills with sparkling song the throats
 Of linnet, lark, and thrush.

Ah, well, we need not frown or weep,
 Tho' sad the days appear,
 If Fortune will but let us keep
 The human sister near.
 In that bright sister's spirit dwell,
 Less changeful, and more true,
 The Life and Youth of Spring—the spell
 That makes the worn world new.

Hers is that smile, and hers that voice,
 Beneath whose flash and ring,
 The hearts they fall upon, rejoice,
 Like birds impelled to sing.
 Through these harsh weeks, whilst she is kind,
 Soft, buoyant, fresh, and gay;
 To Mabel, we can turn, and find
 The missing charms of May.

FRANCIS HASTINGS DOYLE.

* Lines suggested by the remarkably inclement weather during this month in 1887.

Sweet June!

“ Verweile doch, du bist so schön.”

OH stay, because thou art so fair,
Sweet rose-month, green and sunny June !
With thee dies music from the air,
The blackbird's and the throstle's tune ;
Oh ! stay, Sweet June delay !

With thee will fade the blossomed mead,
Of all its starred profusion shorn,
The nightingale will cease to feed
The night with music half forlorn ;
Then stay, Sweet June delay

With thee the sun his topmost tower
Will leave to take his southward way,
Then earlier every vassal flower
Must fold, to mourn his lessened ray ;
Oh ! stay, Sweet June delay !

The woodland darkens with thy death,
The green leaves lose their freshest grace,
The year's of age ; with thy last breath,
Youth's laughing dimples leave his face ;
Then stay, Sweet June delay !

Thy wild-rose dances on its thorn,
Its grace and sweetness fill the air,
All loveliest things in thee are born,
Then stay because thou art so fair ;
Oh ! stay, Sweet June delay !

MAXWELL GRAY.

Why I was Imprisoned.

THE present bearing of many of the clergy and laity towards the Ecclesiastical Courts as now constituted, is undoubtedly exciting a great deal of comment, and people are asking anxiously for the reason.

Let me say that ritual is only the occasion, not the cause of the trouble. The cause really is the character and constitution of the Ecclesiastical Courts. To-day it is the High Church clergy who are attacked for their loyal obedience to the Prayer-book ; but before long it may happen that some earnest, hard-working Evangelical clergyman may find himself in conflict with these very same Courts (as was the case with Mr. Cook not so very long ago, *Flavell v. Cook*), on some point which he considers of vital importance ; and, then, if he cannot conscientiously accept the decision of the Court, he must either resign his benefice, or go to prison for contumacy.

One of the most difficult things to accomplish is to get Englishmen to face a religious grievance or abuse. Once persuade them, quietly and calmly, to do this, and the grievance or abuse is sure, sooner or later, to be removed. To obtain such relief, however, a firm stand has to be made, and much suffering, sometimes even penal, to be endured by those who feel the burden and the unfairness of the existing state of things. It is this which to-day makes the reform of the Ecclesiastical Courts—the unsatisfactory state of which has been so plainly set forth in the Report of the Ecclesiastical Courts Commission (1883)—for the present apparently impossible. Their reform, however, must be taken in hand sooner or later, or the effects will prove disastrous to the well-being of the Church of England.

May I now say what this has to do with the trouble at St. Margaret's, Princes Road, Liverpool? It is of no less than seven years' standing. The Bishop of Liverpool was consecrated

in York Minster on June 11th, and enthroned in St. Peter's, Liverpool, early in July, 1880. On July 31st, a little more than twice eleven days after he actually began his work as our diocesan, he sent for me, and having called my attention to a newspaper paragraph relating to the services at St. Margaret's, virtually asked me to give up that which had been our use for eleven years; and I was to do this notwithstanding it had all been carried on with the knowledge and tacit consent of our former diocesan, the late Bishop of Chester, who was then living.

Here let me say that although Bishop Jacobson had sanctioned a prosecution against my predecessor, much against his inclination, under the Church Discipline Act, owing to his having been wrongly advised that he had no power of veto under that Act, yet, when he instituted and inducted me, not very long afterwards, to the perpetual curacy of St. Margaret's, he never asked me to make any alterations or concessions in the mode of conducting the services, even though I had held his licence for seven years as one of the assistant clergy of that church. Further, that his Lordship more than once refused to pay any attention to complaints which were made against me by outsiders, *i.e.* by those who were not members of the congregation, St. Margaret's having no parish or even district attached to it.

The first step of the Bishop of Liverpool against me, as I have already stated, was to call my attention to a newspaper report of an Evening Service at St. Margaret's, and to ask me to give up the things mentioned in that report, in the interest of peace, stating that he did not ask this of me officially, but as my friend. This request was repeated in his Lordship's letter of the same day.

One would naturally have supposed that the request represented a well-considered and limited proposal; but I could not suppress a doubt, in my own mind, that there might be something more behind. "One demand conceded will lead on to another," wrote the Bishop once, and I could not help feeling that this might prove true on the present occasion.

To remove all doubt, I wrote asking for an assurance that his Lordship would be satisfied if we conceded the points in question.

His Lordship's letters fully justified my suspicions; and I cannot be too thankful that I did not commit myself prematurely. For he demanded from me, before he would license any more curates to St. Margaret's, a written promise that I

would "undertake neither to do nor permit others to do anything in the Services of my church which has been declared *illegal* by recent decisions in the Queen's Courts of Law in Ecclesiastical matters." This was a promise I could not conscientiously give, and thus I found myself in a very painful position; for it is a serious matter for a clergyman to refuse to comply with his Bishop's directions, and to be accused of breaking his ordination vows.

My action was, I believe, fully justified by the three following considerations, to which I would ask careful attention.

I.—His Lordship put forward the authority of the Queen's Courts of Law, presumably those of Lord Penzance, and the Privy Council, as the ground of his action, and said it was my duty to obey "the law," and that "the law" had been decided.

But we cannot recognize either of these Courts as *spiritual*.

Lord Penzance has no *spiritual* authority whatever; for, (a) he has never taken the Oaths of Office, as is clearly shown by the Right Hon. J. G. Hubbard, M.P.;* and, (b) he is bound by the decision of the Privy Council.

Moreover, the Privy Council is a purely secular Court, whose judgments therefore in *spiritual* matters have no force. And I make this assertion fearlessly. For the late Prime Minister has laid it down that, "of Courts of Appeal . . . appointed by Parliamentary majorities, and assented to by the Sovereign on the advice of ministers, whom those majorities had compelled him to accept, *the Church knows nothing*."†

With such authorities to fall back upon, one fears not to ignore all the pretensions to *spiritual* authority put forth on behalf of the so-called final Court of Appeal, Lord Penzance's Court for administering the Church Discipline and the Public Worship Regulation Acts, and the secularized Court of the Province of York.

II.—As to the obedience claimed by the Bishop as due to himself.

The obedience we have promised to pay to the Bishops is a *canonical* obedience. This is due to them only when acting canonically, in their spiritual capacity as Bishops. Whenever a Bishop takes action simply on the ground of a secular decision, the validity of which we cannot recognize, we are bound to

* 'Ecclesiastical Courts.' London: Rivingtons.

† 'Historical Remarks on the Royal Supremacy,' by the Right Hon. W. E. Gladstone, p. 44, ed. 1877.

repudiate the authority of the Bishop's action, just as much as that of the secular decision on the ground of which he acts. The fact that the person who interferes to enforce the decision of the Privy Council happens to be a Bishop does not invest the decision of that Court with any spiritual authority, or add any weight to his interference. It is a mere confusion of ideas to imagine that canonical obedience is due to one who is acting as an agent for the secular Courts.

III.—Further, canonical obedience is due to a Bishop only in matters which are within his discretion. As has been well said, "It is true that we have sworn obedience to him, yet the obedience we promised was not an unlimited obedience but a 'canonical obedience.' The words of the oath are as follows:—'I, A. B., do swear that I will pay true and canonical obedience to the Lord Bishop of C—— and his successors, in all legal and honest commands. So help me God.' Even the Privy Council has laid down that 'the oath of canonical obedience does not mean that the clergyman will obey all the commands of the Bishop, against which there is no law, but that he will obey all such commands as the Bishop by law is authorized to impose.' This being so, there can be no question that a mandate from the Bishop forbidding the use of those 'ornaments of the minister,' which 'were in this Church of England by the authority of Parliament in the second year of the Reign of King Edward the Sixth,' can in no wise be binding on our conscience in virtue of our oath of canonical obedience. The issue of such a mandate would immediately produce a conflict of authority. The Provincial Synod *totidem verbis* in its rubric, orders those vestments to be 'retained and be in use,' while the Bishop on his own authority contradicts the command of the Synod, which is his superior. In such a case there can be no difficulty in regard to our duty. We must obey the greater, even though by that obedience we seem to disobey the less."*

Herein "extremes meet." Only a few days ago a well-known Canon of Liverpool, who has frequently declared his sincere admiration for my prosecutor's action, said, "I speak for my brethren as well as myself, we are quite ready to yield a prompt, loyal, and *canonical* obedience to all the Bishop's *legal* injunctions."

* Rev. F. W. Puller's 'Duties and Rights of Parish Priests,' pp. 7, 17, 18 ; 2nd Edition.

Early in 1881, the Bishop of Liverpool was asked to sanction proceedings against me by my present prosecutor and others; but acting, as we have good reason for believing, under the advice of the late Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Tait, he then exercised his veto, and said in his place in the Upper House of the Northern Convocation at York in April, during the debate on the Ornaments' Rubric, that "he might be permitted to say that during the short time he had been a Bishop he had had some little trouble, but he had declined most distinctly to sanction any prosecution, for he felt that prosecution in the present state of things would do more harm than good."*

Matters remained thus until February 1885, when the present prosecutor, who has nothing whatever to do with the church, did not even live in the mother parish, and never has been a member of the congregation, again complained to the Bishop, and demanded his consent, in order that the case might proceed under the Church Discipline Act. At his Lordship's request I appeared before him on Feb. 14, and, in the presence of Archdeacon Bardsley and his secretary, Mr. Gamon, he asked me to accede to what five years before he had requested of me as "my Bishop and my friend"; but I was to yield now for the peace of the diocese and his Lordship's own personal comfort. I was also told by him, that he had no desire to allow any action to be taken against me personally.

I endeavoured to point out that if it was right to yield to his request then, I ought to have done so five years previously, when he began to punish me for not doing so—thus taking the law into his own hands—by declining either to license any curates for me, or even to allow me to have any such help without his licence, as is the case in other dioceses, a punishment which is still in force. I also stated that the Report of the Royal Commission on the Ecclesiastical Courts actually discredited those Courts by showing that it was never intended that cases of doctrine and ritual should be decided by them. To this his Lordship replied that he had been advised by the Archbishop of York, and his own Chancellor (two of the Royal Commissioners, by the way, who object to the Episcopal veto), that unless I would submit to the decisions of the Judicial Committee, he had no alternative but to allow the case to proceed.

My reply to this was that it had been clearly decided quite

* *The Guardian*, April 27, 1881, p. 583.

recently, in Mr. Carter's case, that under the Church Discipline Act the Bishop had not only the power of veto, but need not assign any reason for using it; and further, that we really had had peace in the diocese, certainly during those last five years, and that in all probability the same state of things would have continued, but for the fact that some members of the diocese had taken exception—and that in no measured terms—to his Lordship's action in the matter of the recent consecration of a neighbouring church; and, further still, that if I yielded, it would naturally appear that I did so because I was threatened with a prosecution, which would probably end in imprisonment, whereas for five years I had refused to yield to one who had requested me to do so as "my Bishop and my friend." My regard for the Episcopal office and my own self-respect both prevented me from acting thus.

None of these arguments, however, had any weight with the Bishop, and in a few days I received a short note saying he must allow the matter to proceed, and that he would send it on by "letters of request" to the Provincial Court at York. Thus the actual litigation commenced, which led to my being imprisoned in Walton Jail on May 5, 1887.

People often say whether the Privy Council is a good or a bad Court, whether its decisions are right or wrong, we ought to obey, even under protest, or at least to appear before the Court under protest.

That I adopted the course of action which has received the sanction of high Ecclesiastical and Secular authorities—the Ecclesiastical authority being that of the late Archbishop of Canterbury (Dr. Tait), and the Secular authority being that of Lord Penzance himself—is shown by the following extract from the Report of the Evidence taken before the Royal Commission on the Ecclesiastical Courts (vol. ii. p. 8):

QUESTION 79. (*Archbishop of Canterbury.*)—Supposing a gentleman objected to the jurisdiction of the Court, what, in your opinion, would be the legal and proper mode of making that objection known?—He would appear under protest to the citation.

80. Have you known any instance of persons appearing in that way?—Yes, I have appeared under protest on behalf of a defendant, and I have succeeded in getting the case dismissed against him there and then.

81. Is that an ecclesiastical case?—Yes.

82. Could you mention the circumstances of it?—I am afraid I

have not the particulars sufficiently before me, but that was so. I have appeared under protest, the protest was upheld, and the defendant was dismissed from all further "observance of justice," as it is called.

83. (*Lord Penzance.*)—Do you recollect what was the ground of the protest?—I cannot say distinctly.

84. In a general way, was it an objection to the Court, or an objection that for some reason the case did not fall within the jurisdiction of the Court?—Yes, it was in effect that; that the cause was not within the jurisdiction of the Court.

85. Then you hold that if Mr. Mackonochie or any other man had a conscientious objection to the jurisdiction of the Court, he ought to have appeared under protest and endeavoured to make good that protest in the face of the Court; is that what you mean?

86. (*Sir R. Phillimore.*)—I do not apprehend that is what he meant, but that where the Court had no jurisdiction, from whatever reason, whether it was not a case within its cognisance, or that the two years required by the 3rd and 4th Victoria, chapter 86, had elapsed, or any other cause, the mode of trying that was to appear under protest?—Yes.

87. (*Lord Coleridge.*)—There is no means known by which a man can take exception, not to the Court, but to the law which the Court administers, which is the point here?

88. (*Archbishop of Canterbury.*)—No, but supposing a man thinks it a very good Court for certain civil purposes established by Act of Parliament, but that it is not a Court which can consider a case like his, how is he to make good his objection?

89. (*Lord Penzance.*)—The answer to it, I take it, is this, that he may appear under protest, and take any legal objection the Court can deal with: but if his objection is one of conscience, which may be powerful with him, but does not fall within the range of the Court to admit, *then there is no course but not to appear.**

90. (*Sir R. Phillimore.*)—There are two things that could be done: the clergyman in question could appear under protest or he could apply for a prohibition.

91. (*Lord Coleridge.*)—No Court would prohibit on the ground that the conscience of a suitor to the Court did not acknowledge the authority of the Court. A Court of Law would look only to see whether the jurisdiction attached, not whether the conscience of the suitor was affected by the jurisdiction; is not that so?

92. (*Sir R. Phillimore.*)—Yes.

93. (*Archbishop of Canterbury.*)—Supposing a person to have an objection to the jurisdiction of the Court, it is granted, is it, that all he can do is to stay away and not have anything to do with the proceedings?

* These *italics* are my own.

94. (*Sir R. Phillimore.*)—He cannot draw a distinction.

95. (*Archbishop of Canterbury.*)—Supposing a person to say, "I have committed an ecclesiastical offence, and ought to be tried by my Bishop, and the person who is going to try me is not my Bishop, but is merely a parliamentary judge appointed for various other matters," what would his course as far as you know be—to stay away?—I suppose so.

My reasons, then, for not complying with my diocesan's demands—and for which I had to submit to a punishment, which his Lordship admitted was "barbarous and preposterous," viz. incarceration in one of Her Majesty's prisons, in a felon's cell, and among ordinary criminals,—are

(1.) I cannot recognize the *spiritual* authority of what his Lordship calls the Queen's Courts of Law, in Ecclesiastical matters.

(2.) His Lordship cannot claim *canonical* obedience when he is simply enforcing the decrees of the *secular* Courts.

(3.) Even when acting as a Bishop, canonical obedience is due to him only as to things within his discretion.

There are instances in history, both religious and political, when the principles at stake were so sacred and so momentous as to justify disobedience to what the Courts called "the law." To their contemporaries the disobedient were "law-breakers," but their own consciences justified them at the time in the sight of God, and the verdict of history justified them afterwards in the sight of man. May not this prove true of the present crisis?

Now the question arises, Can anything be done to remedy the present state of things? and, if so, what? Are the clergy to be prosecuted and imprisoned for acting faithfully to their ordination vow" so to minister the Doctrine and Sacraments and the Discipline of Christ, as the Lord hath commanded, and *as this Church and Realm hath received the same?*" Not as this Church, or this Realm alone, but "as this Church and Realm hath received the same." Mark! it is the Church first, then the Realm.

The Realm may have received Lord Penzance and his Court, but this Church has not. Therefore, with a clear conscience I have made my stand against that which I believe to be thoroughly "unconstitutional," not the law of this "Church and Realm," and consequently not binding on the consciences of loyal Churchmen.

And we must continue to agitate, and suffer, if needs be, until our demands for a restoration of the Ecclesiastical Courts,

especially of the Bishop's own Court, are conceded, and matters are so arranged that we have Courts before which we can honestly and conscientiously plead. Give us these, and, I verily believe it will be found, that whatever the decision of those Courts may be, we, at least, will loyally obey them. Nothing short of this can possibly be satisfactory, or allay the present irritation which is well-nigh unbearable.

It is simply deplorable to listen to the light and off-hand way in which some of our Bishops talk about "deprivation" as the right and the only solution to the difficulty. To substitute deprivation for imprisonment would be madness. To suggest this and leave the root of the matter alone, is to counsel suicide. Surely their Lordships cannot have considered all that is meant by that term. If they are working for it in blindness, may God open their eyes that they may see! If they do know what it implies, and are still working for it, may God forgive them!

The general public certainly has not, and even the majority of the clergy themselves have not, taken the trouble to ascertain clearly what is meant by this ecclesiastical term.

"Deprivation," I take it, is this: *perpetual deposition from office and benefice*. It differs from "degradation" only by the absence of a formal public ceremony for stripping the clerk of his *insignia*; and, of course, like "suspension," is not valid unless imposed by *spiritual* authority.

It is a punishment which, after all, can only be inflicted in isolated cases (as that of imprisonment); even then only when an individual is found who imagines himself to be "aggrieved," or considers it his duty to interfere with and dictate to an united congregation, and where he can secure the co-operation of a Bishop who declines to exercise that power of veto which he accepted when he was consecrated.

I can only ask whether Englishmen will calmly look on and quietly consent to this most severe of all punishments being inflicted on any of the clergy, simply because they cannot honestly and conscientiously recognize that either Lord Penzance, or the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, possess any *spiritual* jurisdiction?

J. BELL COX.

A Jubilee Day's Experience.



MOST people, I suppose, will have had a Jubilee-Day's experience; but I venture to believe that my own particular Jubilee-Day's experience was exceptional. Dreams are an obsolete form of entertainment, both in fact and fiction, or I should have been almost inclined to account my adventures as such; but whether or no they *were* a dream, I must leave it to my readers to judge; to me, at least, they were amongst the burning realities of my life.

It was the twenty-first of June. I woke with anathemas in my heart; I dressed gloomily, devoured a lugubrious egg, and gave a timid glance at the paper, as I knew it would be smothered with Jubilee. I turned to my correspondence, I wrote my letters, I read the last self-probing novel and "powerful" pamphlet from Mudie's, I actually got as far as lunch. Then I came to a full stop. After all, there was nothing for it but to go out, and as one couldn't run away from flags and red cloth and huge V.R.'s, one had better plunge into the thick of it at once and see the fever at its worst. I sauntered, as well as I could, through the Park, along the Buckingham Palace Road towards Westminster. Early as it was, the "Drive" was thronged with carriages. Overhead the trees waved their jubilant boughs right royally, dressed out in every shade of soft brown and tender green; the flowers blazoned forth a queenly heraldry, and vied with the thousand-hued gowns and bonnets that were surging all round. Outside the Park gates there was the same rainbow swirl; waving banners, striving policemen, crimson cloth, wonderful devices, hyperbolic glass mottoes and Prince of Wales's feathers for illumination—all the paraphernalia of Queen's birthdays, Prince's recoveries, and Princesses' weddings rolled into one. And still on the one hand streamed the bland throng of conversational satins, smiling silks, nodding plumes,

well-fed pink-and-whites, bored-to-death beavers and assiduous coats, all rolling on commodiously into fatuity, under the correct escort of powdered footmen; whilst on the other hand, along with the well-bred carriage rider, flowed the mighty torrent of foot-passengers, striving, struggling, jostling, hustling; some in rags, some in patches; hot, expectant, eager, determined to enjoy themselves, come what might—panting, pushing, and much-enduring. And yet *they* were the amused spectators, though they had not one jot of ease and comfort between them. I wondered lazily how this could be, and remember pondering in a vague leisurely fashion as to whether it was because people who lived amongst realities, as these probably did, made everything into a reality, whilst the Mayfair fiction-mongers created shapes from shadows, till Nature revenged herself, and not only their pains, but their pleasures, became mere sickly ghosts, pale negatives, that pursued them for ever, unable either to laugh or cry.

So I jogged along, absorbed in that gloomy train of amateur cynicism commonly produced by national festivities, until I had reached the neighbourhood of Westminster Bridge. Here I paused to look back. What flummery! Seventeen thousand gone too, on the disfigurement of the sacred scrolls and godly arches inside the dear old Abbey. And what they *might* have done with it! How *I* should have spent it! And I thought drearily of the million of briefless barristers getting into mischief from sheer involuntary leisure! Or they could have repaired the drainage—or—philanthropy? No, I was sick of philanthropy; the Mansion House Fund had done for me; there were enough morbid fools already to fill the workhouses and write sensational articles on highly-coloured grievances. Of course they *were* highly-coloured. If *I* had had the governing of the British Empire, they would never have existed! Over-population? Oh yes, of course, there *was* over-population; yet, with a little judicious—— But at this point of my meditations, I unconsciously stopped, and forgot that it was all flummery, that the crowd was oppressive and the air stifling.

I was still looking back. My eyes wandered down the long avenue of fluttering banners and stately buildings, brightening out into blue distance; the mass of swaying colour and motion, the red and green and crimson, the russet stones and purple shadows, the dim sea of heads dazzled me with their kaleidoscopic variety; whilst behind these and above rose the

grey Abbey, mighty as Strength and still as Death, its carven saints and angels looking down on the turmoil in utter quiet, from out their eternity; close by flowed the great river, as unswerving as they and as silent, save for its solemn whisper when it touched the sacred stones—and far off one or two sails had starred the lazy stream, and scarcely moved as one looked at them.

Ah, after all, it was a brave sight, and England was a loyal nation and a prosperous land, and—— Here I was again forced to stop my meditations, for I became conscious of somebody jogging my shoulder. I turned to look down, and discovered that the touch had proceeded from a girl, who stood leaning heavily against a wall. She had gone to sleep, and her listless head had fallen against me. Her tattered hat had half tumbled off her, and dank masses of unkempt hair were straggling down her back and lying over her brow. Her face was grey and worn, though her figure was slight, and the bare arms that drooped from beneath her jagged shawl were those of a young woman. One foot, half out of a torn boot, was slipping forward, in a helpless, slipshod kind of way. My movement roused her—she opened two deep-sunk brown eyes and stared at me dazedly.

"Are you so very tired?" I asked her.

She only stared. I repeated my question.

"I ain't eaten nothink to-day," she muttered. "I warn't doin' nobody no 'arm. None of the bobbies didn't notice me."

"You needn't be afraid—I didn't mean that—but you can't be very comfortable there, and if you have had nothing to eat" (and indeed her white face with its purple rings round the eyes quite soothed my conscience) "you had better come and have some food in a shop, before you do anything further."

"I ain't very nice to go into a shop," she remarked, looking ruefully at her ragged shawl and rusty black skirt, frayed at the edge—"the others 'll larf, p'raps."

However I managed to persuade her to overcome her objections, and took her into an eating-house hard by. She had come out to see the decorations, she told me, and had walked all the way from her home in the heart of the East for that purpose. "Were you eager to see them?" I asked.

"I wanted to see our flags up."

"Your flags—I don't understand."

"We're flag-hands, mother and me, and our master told us

some of 'em was to go on to Westminster—that green and red with the white motter is ours, there, on the red pole; I expect the Queen took a rare notice of that. I cut out that motter an' did all the stitchin' with my own blessed 'ands."

"But is that paying work? How much do you get?"

"Oh, sometimes we make two bob the day between us; but it's a deal of work. If you care to see how it's done, mother 'ud be pleased to see you, and you can come now, along of me, if you like; I ain't a-goin' to stop no longer; I'm sick of it all."

I heartily echoed her sentiment. Here at last was a sensible way out of the Jubilee. I immediately assented.

"You won't want to walk it?" she said, eyeing me doubtfully, when I had said I would come.

I suggested the train. Her dull eyes quite sparkled. "If it ain't payin' too much, I should like that rarely!" she exclaimed. "I ain't ridden in the train, never in all my life."

"Haven't you really?"

"No; once we was goin' into the country to Woodford, but my boots was in pawn, so we couldn't manage it."

By this time we were taking our tickets at Westminster Bridge Station, and before I knew where we were, we found ourselves steaming eastwards in an Aldgate train. To avoid the hideous discomfort of changing in an underground station, where one's only occupation is to swallow clouds of yellow smoke, we alighted at Aldgate, though it was a good way off our destination. We emerged on to a broad street, fronted by jutting oriels and peaked gables that overtopped nothing better now than an open butcher's shop, where the meat still lay exposed to the air in spite of holiday, or a stall of pallid vegetables in like case, appealing, with a pathos of its own, to the passer-by. For about the wide street still clung an aroma of civic pomp, long dead, and making all the sadder, by the memory of its scarlet and gold, the tawdry throng, the monotonous hubbub, the grisly toil, the orange-peel and cracked barrel-organs, the grey faces and slouching steps, which reign there to-day. It seemed as if we had stepped into a foreign country, a poverty-stricken Hades, peopled by weary shadows with loud husky voices, who belonged to an utterly different "make" to the polished hats and decent tradespeople—nay, even to the tatters we had left in Piccadilly.

But we soon forsook the bare comfort of space, and plunged

into the tortuous maze of unsavoury, uneven streets that stretch towards Shadwell, so narrow, some of them, that the houses seem almost to meet in sullen contact; so black and full of shadows, that there is no wonder that the blackness creeps into people's lives, and the shadows amongst which they grow up into their faces, till these turn sad or sullen. Through one slum after another, ill-odours steaming up like yellow fog, from the pavement; heaps of dirt and mouldering bones and stalks and shreds of fish at every corner, till my brain reeled and my heart sickened. And all of them thronged with people; some old, some young; some straight, some stooping; none happy; here lounging at the corners, there crying their wares. One street in particular, I remember; Watney Street, I think it is called, the site of a kind of promiscuous market, held despite Jubilee. The irregular, serpentine street, with its few inches of jerky pavement, was almost blocked with trucks, now piled with gay handkerchiefs, scarlet and yellow, now again with brown vegetables or drooping fish; whilst here and there the carts were covered with coarse crockery, shining green lollipops and rusty bits of old iron; or oftener still by a mongrel heap of old clothes, dragged skirts, battered hats bedizened with brass anchors, tired-looking boots and bundles of soiled calico. Round these the women elbowed and pressed, fingering the calico, feeling the stuffs, holding the hats aloft for effect; here an old bird showed herself by her knowing pinch—between thumb and forefinger—of a piece of scarlet flannel, or the wary way in which she held some purple merino to the light, shutting one eye, as no amateur could, the while; there another was beating down the seller by sheer length of tongue and nervousness of English. Meantime, the men were shouting their wares, haggling and recommending, with many facetious jokes, to the "ladies" and the unkempt girls hustling round the gilt jewellery stall, whilst all round were people loitering, gaping, bargaining, swearing, and brawling. Beyond, a piano-organ was playing a shrill discordant waltz, to which two or three couples of rough factory-girls were dancing up and down before an audience of two small boys and a limp baby. It seemed a travesty of mirth, more hideous far than the gloom; one longed to show them the real joy of Spring, or music or children's laughter.

My companion made no remark; to her it was all quite natural, and the noise was too deafening for conversation. Now

and then she nodded to some acquaintance ; but she told me that she "didn't speak nor make companions thereabouts, excep' to pass 'em the time of day. They're only a rough lot, and we knowed better times onest," she added. We had by now reached Chigwell Hill, recognizable by the uneven inscription, "This is Chigwell Hill, 1763," scrawled at the corner of a house-wall ; and it struck me that 1887 found Chigwell Hill no better off than it was then ; but there was barely time for that thought before we were in the Shadwell High Street, along whose motley pavement we walked until we turned off into Bartholomew Street, some way up, and not far from Ratcliffe Highway.

Here my guide quickened her pace. "It's a bad street this," she remarked tersely, and indeed I knew she was right ; directly I entered it a vague feeling of horror had taken possession of me, and I felt ill at my ease, though to look at, it was broader and far more prosperous-looking than the other streets I had seen. The pavement was strewn with blackened orange-peel—there were no children anywhere ; but all the house-doors were open, and the inmates were lounging or sitting on the steps—loud women and gaudy girls, with sodden laughs, purple faces, and coarse hanks of floating hair—all dressed in draggled finery, brass ear-rings, and artificial roses soaked by countless rains. Sailors, Italians, and idling men, smoking bad tobacco, were grouped round these, making coarse jokes, or, in some cases, racing and dancing with them, whilst the others urged them on with shouts of laughter. The shouts became jeers as we passed ; several of the girls made remarks, and one cried—"How's the Babby ? Goin' 'ome to mammy, in course." I was thankful to leave them behind me, when we passed beneath a crumbling archway, so low that we had to walk stooping, and came out into Bartholomew Square. Once it might have been a courtyard, where stiff leisure and stately manners had their day ; now it is only a fetid yard, surrounded on three sides by mouldering houses, crooked and squinting ; the air is putrid from the refuse flung into it from the dwelling-places ; two ropes are slung across it, from which flap some half-washed calico garments ; and all about on the cold stones sit little half-clothed babies, with tangled golden hair and wondering blue eyes, contentedly sucking such bones and orange-peel as they can pick up there.

We stopped at No. 3. An Irishwoman, with a kindly grin

and wild grey hair, was standing at the door, alternately heaping enormous caressives and good-natured casual oaths on the children, who made no show of obeying her. "Oh, it's you, Nelly, mi darlint," she said to the girl, as we approached. Nelly made some sort of introduction, on my behalf. "How do yer do, mi pet?" exclaimed the Irish lady effusively, wiping her hand on her black apron and offering it to me with the frankest goodwill in the world; "it's glad to see you I am, mi dear; the divil take yer, Charlie, mi darlint, and yer'll swallow that fish-bone as sure as I'm Katie O'Connor, and I hope yer'll tak a cup o' tea" (to me), "if I can get the watter to bile, which I can't, havin' no range. And your mother's at home" (this to Nelly); "leastways if she isn't, she's only jist round the corner."

But she *was* at home, as we found when we had climbed the rickety ladder which served as a staircase and boasted no landing; so that, when we stood on the top step, Nelly had to lean forward and push open the rotten door, which never did shut entirely, owing to a weak hinge, but usually swung to and fro the livelong day with a jarring creak, and let in the hot air and bad smells from the court outside.

"Oh! there you are at last, Nell," said a fretful voice, as we entered; it came from a woman who was standing in the middle of the room. She couldn't have been very old, I think, but she looked as if she had never known youth, let alone childhood. Her face was listless and ashen-white; her very hands looked utterly tired, and as if they longed for death instead of flags. There was a dismal effort at tidiness about her; her apron was clean, though mended in several places; her black skirt was patched with grey, and her colourless hair was combed and brushed, even though her boots were mere fragments, and a tattered shawl was all she had round her shoulders. She tried to smile, when Nell introduced me, and with a gracious hospitality that made her almost queenly for an instant, drew out the only whole chair in the room for me to sit down on, carefully dusting it with her apron first. "You'll take a cup of tea," she added, trying to bustle about, and talking as if she had cups of tea and to spare—by the dozen. I tried to refuse, but she seemed hurt, and I let her put on the kettle and take down the cup with the blue sprig, which had only one chip and stood on a shelf in the corner. "It's the last of my weddin' set," she observed with some pride, "the rest's in pawn. Here, Nell"—she was trembling a little beneath the weight of the kettle—"just take this down

to Mrs. O'Connor, and axe 'er to let you bile it on 'er fire—we ain't got none, and there's only this one room, you see."

"How *do* you cook then?"

"Lor bless you, we ain't 'ad nothink to cook this four week and more, with him out of work. Bread and drippin' don't want much cookin'. No, Baby, I ain't got another crust for you to-day," she answered wearily, to a tug at her dress. "Come, Nelly," to the returning girl, "jest take Baby for a bit, she's frettin' her blessed 'cart out."

I wondered how on earth Nell could see which *was* the baby—there seemed so many of them all exactly the same age. One of them, with nothing on but a little ragged shirt, was casually sitting on the window-sill, utterly oblivious of his neck, whilst a small girl was carrying another as big as herself, and crooning a tuneless little ditty to it the while, though she was bent backwards and nearly double under its weight. Nelly, however, with wonderful discrimination, picked out *the* Baby in question, recognizable perhaps because it had the biggest and hardest crust in its mouth, and sat with it in her lap.

"You seem very tired," I said to her mother.

"And you've spoke the truth," she replied. "It's that blessed Jubilee, an' that's wot it is. I'm fair dragged out with them flags—they're bitter work, they are—that last took me the night. I *should* like to 'ave seen it up though. Did the Queen notice it pertikler, did you hear, Nell?"

"No one couldn't tell me, but I 'ear as she bowed a good deal to the right an' left, so p'raps one of them nods was for our flag. It certainly looked a beauty, and was hung quite in the fore, mother."

"I should rarely 'ave liked to see that Jubilee, but with all them babbies wot is one to do? There ain't no leavin' them for a second. What did *you* think of it, Nell?"

"Lor, mother, I didn't see much of it, wot with the crowd and the bobbies and fallin' asleep; this one" (pointing at me) "will tell you more about it."

"Mrs. Brown's Louisa, two doors off, says it was jest lovely—streams of West-End people, all rigged out like the Pantomime, with feathers and diaminks, and no end o' red cloth and banners and 'loomynations. But"—turning to me with apologetic deference, in case I should be offended by her apparent preference for Mrs. Brown's Louisa, and with a stray glance at my well-to-do clothes—"very likely *you* know the

Queen 'erself quite well?" I replied in the negative. "You don't live neighbourin', p'raps?" she continued sympathetically. I said that I lived in Kensington. "Kensington? I 'ad a friend lived in service with a lady there once—Mrs. Jones, the lady's name was," she remarked confidently, in full expectation that I should show joyful recognition of the name. I was sorry to disappoint her, and, to turn the subject, asked her whether these were all *her* children?

"Every man-Jack of them," she said proudly (they were all girls, so it seemed slightly inappropriate), "that's Eliza, that's Elizabeth, that's Jane, that's Polly—" and so on and so on, as she went round the circle rapidly with her forefinger; "and Ellen, she's out at work, so she aint 'ere," she concluded.

"Ah, she is able to be a help to you then?"

"Oh, nothink to speak of—it's as much as she can do to keep 'erself in shoe-leather; she's only in the match-trade—Lucifers, I mean. She fills the boxes."

"How much does she make then?"

"Oh, a tidy sum—'alf-a-crown some days when she works over-hours—they gives one penny for filling every twelve dozen."

Two and sixpence for every 4320! I made an exclamation.

"Why, that's fair play," she said, astonished at me; "them biscuit-packing girls can't only make a penny an hour, unless they're orful quick at it, so even if they works thirteen hours, —an' that's over-time—they only makes their thirteenspence."

At this juncture the door opened, and her husband came in. He was a fine-looking man, with a high brow and hair prematurely grizzled, but he was very lame; perhaps it was this defect that had given a slightly bitter curve to his thin lips. He limped in, gave me a moody nod, and sat down with a book, in which, to all appearance, he soon became buried. "You mustn't mind *'im*," she whispered; "he's always at 'is books; but 'he's a good man, and a wonderful scholar—though he's cruel proud, but I think it comes of the cages."

This mystery was subsequently explained by the man himself. He told me he was a birdcage-maker by trade, though now he was out of work. It was some time before he answered my remarks; at first he only raised his head to grunt at me and then sink it on to his book again; but he soon thawed at the mention of some volume which I asked him whether he had read. He said "No," and I offered to lend it him. His whole face brightened and the bitterness quite vanished.

"You *can* do one thing, if you want to make me happy," he said.

"What is that?"

"Lend me a history—any history," he exclaimed eagerly; "I've read the Church Library through." I asked him what he was reading now. "Oh, that," he said, taking up his volume ashamedly and hiding it behind him; "I'm ashamed you should see me with it, but it's all I could get as I 'adn't read already; it's 'Markham's History of England,' but I find it sadly childish." He showed it to me, neatly wrapped in brown paper. He had read all Dickens I found, nearly all Kingsley, Green's histories, Motley's 'Dutch Republic' and some of Carlyle. "But, bless you, that man, Thomas Carlyle, 'e don't write the Queen's English—he coins *his* English, he does!" he exclaimed scornfully; "and as for *facts*—he don't give you facts. Why, his 'French Revolution' is only a big commentary—it ain't *facts*."

All the time his wife stood by, listening proudly. "Ain't 'e clever?" she half gasped.

"Hold your tongue, Susan," he said loftily, "*you* don't know nothink about it. I ain't clever, as folks go in the *West-End*; but if I'd 'ad a school eddication, I shouldn't a' run far short. But I ain't got no books at all to go on with. Bless you, them wimminkind knows nothink about books" (apologetically), "nor learnin' neither. They never reads unless it's them darned novelettes or some sich foolery. I niver gives them the good books; they can't 'preciate 'em a bit. But we ain't got no literatoor in the East-End, nor dramer neither—it's all blood and thunder down 'ere," and he jerked his thumb over his shoulder.

"Don't any of your friends down here read at all?"

"Well, there's the club at the 'Five Brothers,' but it mostly runs to swearin' and drinkin', and polyticks is very high; them Socialist cads has got hold of it now," with supreme contempt. "But there's one chap hereabouts as I know who's got a rare headpiece. He reads a fair deal one way and another, 'travels' mostly, as he's a Tar: but it's his experiences o' life and furrin' parts an' ways, wot draws me to 'im. Travel does a deal for a man. I've a mind to take you to see him, as you seem to take a reasonable interest in things."

I expressed my anxiety to see the "Tar," and after some preparation and many thanks and farewells to Nelly and her mother, we left the house together and made for the High Street.

We only had a four minutes' walk, in which we passed some ten "fried-fish shops," where oily-fringed girls were turning over hissing fish (nature unknown) in the yellow water, with their fingers, their eyes on the streets the while. A little way back from the thoroughfare stood a solid block of tall sandstone houses—so tall, that the eye wearied in following the endless ladder of windows—Model Buildings, on the face of them. Towards these we turned and entered the central yard—a substantial haven at last. The sun had dappled the paving-stones with light and shade, where we entered, and had thrown a zigzag river of light across the wall, so that it seemed chequered by silver lichens. A group of boys were playing marbles at one end, and a baby in a clean pinafore was hugging a headless wooden dolly on the step. On three sides rose the long brown houses, cheerfully diversified by pots of scarlet geranium and hanging green on the sills, and now and then by a canary in a cage, whose shrill notes pierced downwards to us, as if it could see the sun—whilst through an open window, and a trellis-work of creeper high up, leaned an old man in a nankeen coat, the light touching his silver hair quite gently, as he smoked his pipe of peace in the warmth. White railings, all the way up, marked the balconies that ran round every floor. The room we sought was on the ground floor, and its inmates were at home. It was so daintily clean that you could have eaten your dinner off the scoured, carpetless boards, let alone the small deal table, at which a woman sat sewing. There was a Dutch clock in the corner—ticking in a kind of didactic fashion to the two kitchen-chairs and the stool ranged below it. On the wall hung some feathered arrows, a bow and strings of gay beads, not to speak of three nautical photographs in tin frames, a glazed chromo of the Queen in white, waving her hand rather aimlessly at three sailors with Union Jacks, and a pale-blue savage in the background, and a coloured print over the mantel, representing an impassioned lover in a plaid suit, clasping in his pink hands a burly lady with flushed, youthful cheeks, and a bulbous head that would *not* fit on to his gaudy shoulder. Below this, in the place of honour and under glass, stood a carefully made model of a ship in coloured cardboard and on blue calico waves.

"Yes, our pictures *is* smart," said the old sailor, a grizzled veteran, in a blue jersey, as he took his pipe from his mouth and rose from his stiff wooden armchair, to receive me—(I had

admired the room). "*That* theer's *my* favourite," jerking his thumb towards the plaid lover. "My Missus there takes preference to the Queen Victoryer, God bless 'er! which is seemly in wimminkind and seasonable for the Jubilee. Why *I* seed 'er, when she cum to open the People's Palace which you may know, and I was right down surprised—right down surprised, that's wot I was, to find wot a comfortable pusson she was—more like one's mother. It guv me quite a jump. She's the born image of a aunt I had; jest that expression. Howsumever, I wish Missus there could get a holiday and see H.M., that I do."

"Missus there" was stitching away fast and silently at an enormous sheet of unbleached calico. She raised her head and smiled. Her face was worn to a bone, and very white; her back was bent double, and there were red marks round the sunken eyes, above which the white hair was neatly drawn away—but perhaps it was rather the weariness of the past than the present, for her smile was very sweet.

Not knowing what else to say, I tried my stock remark, and asked her if she were tired. She laughed.

"Bless you, yes, I'm always tired, but that ain't none so bad, if you come to consider it."

"You've had worse troubles then."

She laughed again quite softly, as if surprised at such a question. "Tired feelins' ain't nothink, when you've been through wot I have—ever sin' I turned twelve an' mother died. Father was mostly indifferink after, an' took to drink, an' there was five young 'uns for me to see to."

"And then you married?"

"Yes, when I was twenty, I married '*im*' (pointing to her husband), thank the Lord! A shared trouble's, only half a trouble, they say, an' indeed I found it so. Not but wot it wasn't struggle an' struggle, fight an' fight, till my heart was sick. Six little 'uns I had, such pretty babbies,"—she stopped sewing and her eyes grew young, in their tenderness—"but I buried three." She rubbed her hand across them.

The old man whistled. "She takes on *now* about it," he said, "though it's gone twenty year; but lor, they wos company when I was out to sea—an' she missed 'em sadly, specially at tea-time. I like to see the wimmin fond," he added, with his own eyes rather misty.

"No—I don't complain—I was often glad they wos took, after, when we frequent hadn't no dinner, and all our bits o'

things in pawn—all excep' my weddin'-ring ; I never could part with that, come wot might. But lor', where the use o' always accountin' of one's troubles, there's been a deal o' blessin', 'asn't there, Tom?" He nodded silently from out a blue cloud of tobacco-smoke.—"I've never 'ad a moment's sorer from my live children," she continued, "thank God!—as good children as ever stepped, and he a model son" (pointing to one of the photographs on the wall). "And they're all married comfortable now, an' helps when they can. So we shouldn't grumble ; we all 'as our troubles, 'asn't we?" I assented. "The rich no less nor us, I dessay," she remarked, with a delicate courtesy, worthy of a Duchess—"an' more, so to speak, for they troubles about the poor, too."

She told me they were pretty comfortable now, though it was hard work. They paid five shillings for their two rooms. She was a trouser-finisher, only making threepence a pair, though she did all the work except the cutting-out, and couldn't afford a machine—besides "finding the extras" out of her pay. Just now she was making a pair of coarse sheets, double the ordinary size, at twopence the pair, though she had worked at them nearly all night. But she was quite happy over this. "And *he's* a rare hand at stitching them trousers," she said proudly ;—"he's that clever with his fingers you wouldn't believe, besides readin' out loud, to cheer the work. Why he cuts out all 'em models o' ships ; beautiful, ain't they?—an' he made that 'andsome patchwork quilt for the bed, 'is very self,"—she pointed through the half-open door to a tiny inner room, where a bed was just visible.

"Well, it's all I can do, now I'm disabled," he said sadly, "else *she* shouldn't be slavin' for the two of us.

"Haven't you a pension?" I asked him.

"No—I ain't got a claim. I fell off a mast, which lamed me for life, when I'd only served seven year, and you must serve nine year for a pension. It seems a bit onfair sometimes, when strappers gets their pension, without doing half for the service as I did, but it's the Lord's will, an' it must be done"—and he leant back again, and puffed at his pipe contentedly.

The conversation turned on his travels, and indeed I found that my companion had not overrated him. His experience had given him a breadth of mind which was an education in itself, the more so, as it came from life, and not from any culture. Presently he began talking about sailors. "They're an awful

rough lot about here," he said. I told him that I had been struck by the evils of Bartholomew Street.

"Bless you," he said, "I've seen wusser nor *that*. Where I'm a-goin' this blessed evenin' to see a friend, down Barking way—the Isle of Dogs, you know, why there I pass through streets fifty times as bad."

Encouraged by my former experience, I made bold to ask whether I might accompany him. He consented in a moment, and, to cut a long matter short, before half an hour was over I found myself by his side, on the road to Stepney Station.

I do not distinctly remember what we passed nor how we went. I only have a vague impression that the further we journeyed, the greyer grew the country, till it deepened to a murky black. Here and there I can recall dark beds of slime, and once a charred field, where a decrepit man with a tangled white beard was stooping over his spade; sometimes there was a glimpse of a turbid yellow river, broadening as we neared our goal to a stagnant, brown marsh, where the water lay in steaming pools, with banks of ooze between, and rank patches of scorched, stunted grass. It is to me now more like a memory of Tartarus—the Tartarus of Virgil or Dante.

We alighted at Barking Station, and the very porters seemed to stare at me, as if a visitor were an event. For a few yards, we walked along a bare road; then we plunged into the High Street. I shuddered! Low, flaunting, coarse—Shadwell had been all this, but here there was something worse: a grisly, deformed tawdriness—a sodden despair—a voiceless listlessness. The road was very broad; the houses were all low, not more than two stories high, with their basements, sometimes their worm-eaten doors, sunk deep in the ground and leaning this way or that; now and again there was a taller one, heightened by an overtopping gable that leaned forward as if to fall and crush the passer-by. They were all so old that they were rotten, and their odd squinting windows leered down at me, as I walked, like so many old, bleared eyes. At the end of the street, a crumbling tower, half-covered with ivy, scowled at the roofs beneath; in spite of the daylight, one or two flaring gas-jets were burning in the broken windows of the shops, where you could not stand upright, whilst terrible odours lurked in each stone and thickened the air; everything was rotting, everything was old, and surely there is nothing more hideous than impious age. Crowds of people were standing at the

doors, and in dreary groups, or were slowly wheeling trucks of ill-smelling shell-fish and faded vegetables. Their skins were grey, their forms shrunk; all the men were stunted, most of them deformed. I saw one hunchback after another, and their very street-cries were wails. Amongst these too, there was nothing young. Youth had died out, and all enjoyment and even the instinct of hope. The children were old men and women, and looked the same age as they; everybody was reduced to a dead level of years, by sheer force of hopelessness.

We walked on and on, saying little, and finally, after many ins and outs, turned down an alley, whose name I have forgotten. All down one side of it were low two-storied houses, white with thatched roofs; over some of the open doors "Registered Lodging-House" was written in large letters; over others there was no inscription. "That's she as owns the whole bilin' of 'em," said my guide, pointing to a slightly soiled old lady sitting behind the counter of a small shop at the corner, where "Tit-bits" stuck to green lozenges and old boots crowned a household loaf. We left her some hundred yards behind, and paused to look in at one of the open doors.

At first I could see nothing but a seething mass of heads, packed close together and stretching far back, with here and there a dab of colour made by a gay scarf or kerchief; then I perceived that the crowd consisted mostly of sailors, English, French, Italian, with glittering earrings and coloured neckties—and of girls and women with wild hair, such as I had seen on my way. Their faces were crimson from the light of the great fire at one side, where a girl in a short scarlet petticoat stood stirring a huge iron pot with a ladle. Across the room were long wooden benches for sleeping accommodation, and upon one of them a street-tumbler, in dirty spangles and pink satin, lay sleeping heavily; whilst a lean white dog, with a tin cup round its neck, whined at the feet of a small man with long red hair, a battered billycock hat, a knowing eye, and a placard which announced that he was "Blind from Birth" round his neck. They all seemed to know my friend, and not to resent our coming. "Walk in, won't you?" said one. "Are you a Jubilee-Collector?" asked another jocosely. I replied in the negative, and taking up the theme, enquired whether they had been making holiday. "Oh, *we're* sailors in *this* house; *we've* got unceasin' 'oliday, on land, *we've*; *we're* better off than the others in this d—d

place. He's a clever chap wot called it the Isle of Dogs—every blessed bloke of 'em goes to the dogs here."

"Why here in particular?"

"Bless yer, my fine babby—didn't yer know that the 'ole popillation in this darned slum goes to work in the sewers, becos all the sewage of London comes 'ere for a final outlet? And if that ain't enough to blast 'em, wot is? Why, one pore chap was stifled to death in a sewer t'other day, let alone that it all overflows once a year and makes the very pestilence!"

"Overflows here?"

"No, not these pertikler houses ain't so bad, but most of the streets is, as this female" (pointing to a woman, loitering near) "can tell you—she lives in the worst street."

"Why, all the 'ouses in them streets get flooded in sich times," she said drearily, "up to the second story—I 'ave to wade through *my* room; and when the river *do* go back, it leaves a orful refuse. Whole streets get carried off by typhoid—it took my baby last year," and she walked on. I followed her example, for I could bear no more, and my guide, who was anxious to reach his destination, had, ere this, bidden me farewell. As I came away, two men were fighting for a copper, and a woman with ashen face, and tangled mass of floating hair, was screaming from an open window, high up: I could not wonder.

* * * * *

I felt as if I had been stunned, nor can I remember what I did and where I went, till I found myself, by what means I knew not, once more on Westminster Bridge.

The sun was dying, the sky had faded; the tired flags flapped disconsolately on a wind, laden with the scent of worn-out flowers; the sounds of rumbling traffic were growing faint and gentle—only the solemn Abbey was the same as before. I stood on the bridge, looking over into the water, and thought of all I had seen, till my soul ached within me. How dared the nation rejoice, on the brink of this hideous abyss? Where was her safety with such a basis? How should I now have spent my seventeen thousand? Yes, how *should* I? It was easy to feel right, but how could one act right? And who has solved the Sphinx's riddle?

Fawcett and the Politico-Economists?

Maybe they have prevented our workhouses from overflowing—they have fed our skilled workmen—they have helped our prosperity. But what of the unskilled masses who want

succour for their own sakes, not for the sakes of England? what of the sudden sight of writhing starvation, helpless vice, inherited disease, which will never make efficient labourers, but only need our hearts and hands and heads? Do men want our help the less, because they suffer through their own faults?

Karl Marx and the Socialists then?

Well, after all, does a wild lovable dream of the Future help the Present! Can a perpetual effort to force the many to give up, as only the few *will* do, can *that* heal broken lives and gaunt Famine and crushing pain? Where it *has* succeeded, in Robert Owen's village-community and the like cases, it has always been for a short time and amongst the very few. And so too, to go a long way back, with its best-known instance of success, Apostolic Communism—which was instituted among a certain set of noble souls, and among that set alone, in a land where over-population did not exist.

But the *idea* on which Socialism is founded—the idea of Brotherhood with all men, surely *this* is good? Still, why formalize, why compel kinship? And there came upon me some words near nineteen hundred years old, which would not have lived so close to our hearts, had their fulfilment been liable to annual Government inspection! And why should not the idea of *family* which is the birth of Race and of Nation, why should not that fill the world, till brotherly feeling become no longer a vague glow, or a fugitive impulse, but a living list of daily duties, petty or great, whichever they be, untouched by the glamour of adventure or asceticism, but shining with the light of the *duty*, if not of the *love*, that we give our own kindred! The *love* it would be impossible to give: could we force it, it would be a lower thing, and we cannot expect to have the same affection for people on an entirely different plane of feeling, culture, and interest to ours, and bound to us by no tie of habit or association, as for those who belong, not only to the same mental and moral climate as ourselves, but also to the sacred world of childhood and of memory. Still, cannot we give them devoted duty and brotherly protection and sisterly pity? Cannot we take the same trouble to find out their individual powers and inclinations, their faults and virtues, as we do with our own relations, and may we not thus help them to self-dependence and at least some sense of responsibility? Why not use the money we too often devote to careless and uninterested relief, for their apprenticeship to the trades for which they have a liking, just as we try to ensure the

prosperity of our own children by training them for the professions of their choice? And, as with these, must we not, on the one hand, keep back a gift where we know it would be harmful, and, on the other, give, or even maintain, where we feel that our doing so is needful, and that temporary support will lead to final independence—during an illness or apprenticeship, for instance. To believe that all giving produces immediate pauperism is surely as absurd and harmful as the other extreme, since the result in either case is worse poverty and deeper misery. Can we make sweeping rules for individuals in one class more than for those in another? And would it not be better if anxious thought, such as we reserve for our own belongings, ennobled all our withholding and guided all our bestowing.

Besides, were there not millions of familiar duties to be done, still more evident than these? If the educated capitalists would only buy up the land in this East End, for example, and with it the right to look after their tenants; if they would only rebuild, redrain, repair? And a vision rose before me of purified streets, and clean dwellings and sweeter air—of purified souls and clean bodies and sweeter thoughts—of Model, instead of Common-lodging-houses, where men no longer herded like cattle in a storm—of dying disease and happier children.

Would not this, in very truth, be the Nation's Jubilee?

* * * * *

But ah! how reach it? All the workers I knew, despaired at the sea they were trying to push back with their hands. Where was the good—where the result? There was no use in hope or faith; they were dead.

The evening-clouds drifted on above me—the river rippled on below, unasking and unknowing of the end to which they went. How did *they* do this? Had *they* faith? Had *they* hope?

And suddenly their voices blent with the voice of my soul and became one with it, so that I did not know whether I was speaking or they. I heard them give forth one sound—and the sound was—"Love." "Love"—sang the river, where the light was dying: "Love"—whispered the wind that went no man knew whither—and the Abbey-bell, with a peal of triumph, echoed—"Love." Then I knew that Love and Labour were the same.

The sun had set and the night had fallen, but the darkness held the promise of a new day.

After the Crimes Bill, What next?

I HAVE shown in a former article* that after the Irish famine of 1847 and 1848, a great opportunity was lost, through the supineness and party spirit of statesmen, for converting numbers of small holdings, on which the peasants could only exist in a state of semi-starvation, into large farms, with improved agriculture, and for placing a wretched and discontented population in countries where they could live and thrive. I also endeavoured to trace the downward course of Ireland since 1870, downward as to industry and wealth, morality and peacefulness; one so-called "remedial measure" after another, sinking the country deeper and deeper into poverty and lawlessness: freedom of contract being done away; the landlords deprived of all control over their estates, and idleness and dishonesty rewarded. Nothing, in fact, being too unjust to be conceded to clamour and love of office.

Now the only question that remains is this. How is the country to be restored to a state of industry and peace? There are ways certainly, which, if we were under a despotic monarch, might be used with effect. For instance, by wiping out the separate Irish Statute book, and (ignoring the Channel which divides the countries) making Ireland really an integral part of the kingdom, as Wales is; but, while antagonistic parties exist in England, this is not likely to be done. Again, disfranchisement would have that effect, but here too, party spirit comes in. Ireland has been so long the battle-ground of English statesmen, that it would too much weaken the power of any party, even to propose such a measure; apparently, nothing now remains for the Government but to endeavour to neutralize, as far as is possible, the evil effects of the legislation of late years. Taking the present condition of the country and the laws as a

* "The State of Kerry."—*Murray's Magazine*, May 1887.

starting-point, in the first place we find the landlords legally ruined. This has been often asserted; but the landlords have borne their losses so patiently, that the statement is, by many in England, considered only "a figure of speech." The proof, however, is unfortunately too easy. Let us take, for instance, an estate in the South of Ireland of what was, twenty years ago, £5000 a year, and on which the following charges existed, when the present owner came into possession:—

CHARGES IN 1867.		£
Jointure to Widow		600
Charges for younger children, four of £5000 each at 5 per cent.		1000
Tithe to support Established Church of Ireland		300
Poor rates, 6d. in the £1		125
County Cess, 6d. in the £1		125
Management of estate		250
		<hr/>
		£2400
Surplus left for the landlord		£2600

Now let us take the same estate in 1887:—

		£
Jointure for Widow		600
Charges for younger children, four of £5000 each		1000
Tithe given to the State by "remedial Act"		300
Charge for support of Irish Church, 1 per cent. voluntary assessment		50
Poor rates increased to 1s. 6d. in the £1, by Act allowing guardians to subsidize evicted Nationalists		375
Co. Cess increased to 1s. in the £1 by additional police and compensation for malicious injuries		250
Management of estate		300
1 year's rent taken from the landlord by Arrears Act, which he had to borrow to pay charges		250
Reduction by Land Court, 25 per cent. on gross rental		1250
Law costs to recover judicial rents		about 300
		<hr/>
		£4675
Surplus left for Landlord, provided the tenants pay the reduced rent		£325

This is a plain statement of the condition of what was, twenty years ago, a favourably situated estate, and on which we now see the broken-down landlord occupying the position of an

unpaid bailiff on what is nominally "his own property;" but when we look into the condition of estates on which greater charges were laid by former owners, who never anticipated such "generosity" on the part of England, we find that ruin is not only the lot of the landlord and his family, but also of the numerous mortgagees and incumbrancers, who, relying on the justice of English laws, foolishly invested their money in land securities, and the sufferings of this class will be understood by some in England, who are callous to the wrongs of Irish landlords; as the mortgagees are, in numerous instances, English people, who have left the investing of their money to their lawyers, and who, looking for good interest, acted on the principle that "land cannot run away," or English and Scotch insurance, and other companies, which have lent money on Irish land: so that many, who through party spirit, or expediency, joined in the cry to hunt down one class of their fellow-subjects, will soon begin to realize the fact, that national swindling recoils, as well as individual dishonesty.

We have now to face the fact that the country must change hands, and the present landlord class must disappear: whether to remain at home in their changed position, or to make new homes in other countries, will depend on their powers of endurance, and on the terms allowed them by the English nation, who must be, by this time, convinced that robbing the landlords to conciliate the Land League, has not had the desired effect; and that breaking down the Irish Church, to conciliate the priests, has not succeeded, as the priests are more disloyal, and the Land or National League more powerful than in 1868, when the "soothing" legislation commenced.

First, I would suggest that the State should relinquish the tithe-rent charge, the transfer of which was one of the most flagrant of Mr. Gladstone's various acts of injustice. The tithe-rent charge was a tax on landowners, for the support of an Established Church in Ireland. England disestablished the Church in Ireland and took possession of its income; and now, while an Irish landlord is compelled, when selling his land, to submit to the dictation, as to the price he must accept, of the Land Commission, by whose order he may have to sell at one-half of the value, he is compelled by the Government (without liberty of appeal to any Court) to pay the State twenty years' purchase on this tax, although he has already paid fourteen instalments. Without so redeeming, he cannot sell.

The first act of the English nation, if returning to a sense of political honesty, would be the complete surrender of this tax.

Secondly, a loan should be granted to landlords to pay off mortgages at the same rate of interest as it is proposed to lend to the tenants for purchase, such loan to continue until the land can be sold to the tenants at a fair rate. This would be but a small concession, would be no loss to the State, and might enable the landlords to live in the country on a remnant of their properties.

Thirdly, the feelings between landlord and tenant have been so much embittered by the recent acts of Legislature, that there is a general consensus of opinion that compulsory sale is necessary. In 1881, Lord Dufferin most graphically described what has since been the experience of all connected with land in Ireland. He wrote then, that "in the estimation of the tenant, Mr. Gladstone's Act had put him into the same bed with his landlord; his immediate impulse has been to kick his landlord out of bed. The temptation of the Government will be to quiet the disturbance by giving the tenant a little more of the bed. This will prove a vain expedient; the tenant will only say to himself, 'one kick more, and the villain is on the floor.' If, however, instead of giving the tenant more of the bed we cut the bed in two, he will then roll himself up in his blanket, and be all in favour of every man having his own bed to himself. In other words, the problem is to render Ireland Conservative, to make it the interest of the peasantry to support law and order, to recognize the sanctity of property, and the reasonableness of rent. This can only be done by making him an owner, and an owner upon a very extensive scale." Lord Dufferin then suggested a scheme of purchase upon fair and proper terms, making the Local Government Board responsible for the collection of interest on the money lent by Government, which would have ensured its payment by making it the interest of every man to oblige his neighbour to pay. Had Lord Dufferin's scheme been then taken up by the Government, Ireland would now be peaceable and comparatively loyal. But, as I have said, the Land League is now so powerful in the South and West of Ireland, and tenants have been so long taught to consider themselves the rightful owners, and rent an unjust tax, that voluntary purchase, except on the terms dictated by the Land League and the priests, is impossible, and for this reason

compulsory sale at a fixed fair rate of purchase is generally thought necessary. In order to carry out this, property should be divided into three classes, which I will call respectively A, B, C.

Class (A), to comprise head-rents and lands on which the tenants' interest has been sold for more than ten years' purchase.

(B) Rents judicially fixed.

(C) Rents judicially fixed, and where the land is poor and the holdings small.

(A) Rents of this class to be sold at 20 years' purchase, and all charges to be paid in full out of the purchase-money.

(B) Rents to be sold at 18 years' purchase. All Government charges to be reduced 25 per cent., and all other charges such as mortgages, annuities, &c., to be reduced 10 per cent.

(C) Rents to be sold at 16 years' purchase. Government charges to be reduced 50 per cent., and all other charges reduced 25 per cent.

In order to encourage the immediate completion of sales, a free grant of some millions might be given, and to those tenants who will pay down a portion of their purchase-money, a sum amounting to half of such payment might be granted. For instance, if a tenant's purchase-money is £300, and he is prepared to pay down £66 13s. 4d., I would give him £33 6s. 8d.; so that his future instalments would be £8 instead of £12. And if the strain be considered too great for the English Exchequer, I would recommend that the tenants be allowed to purchase half their rent, on the same principle that rules the purchase of the whole. This in many cases would enable the landlords to pay off their charges, and still give them an interest in the country.

As to the tenants whom it is proposed to convert into peasant proprietors, a comparison with Scotland will enlighten us as to their position and prospects. Scotland contains a population of less than four millions, one million of whom are engaged in agriculture. In Ireland there is a population of about five millions, of whom four millions exist by agriculture. Still, Scotland is the best farmed country in the civilized world, and Ireland the worst. Scotland, by the efforts of one million of agriculturists, grows more corn and more turnips than

Ireland with her four millions—although the rich tenants are fenced round by laws protecting them from the interference of their landlords, while the Scotch tenants have no such protection. Again, the rental of Scotland increased, from 1840 to 1880, 49 per cent., while that of Ireland decreased, and the anarchy and squalor of Ireland are unknown in Scotland.

These statements are not matters of opinion, they are facts to be proved by Government statistics, therefore the question for our rulers to consider is, "How can Ireland be brought into a condition resembling Scotland, as to contentment and prosperity?" Of course it may be said that religion and race help to cause the difference, since the North of Ireland, which resembles Scotland in both race and religion, is prosperous; but the North of Ireland has manufactures, and is therefore not overpopulated. The South and West have no factories, and it would not be possible for four human beings, of any nationality, to thrive on food sufficient for one. So that the first step towards prosperity should be an extensive system of emigration from the congested districts. I would suggest that a line should be drawn across Ireland from Sligo to Waterford, and in the district west of that line, three, at least, of every five families be given an opportunity to emigrate. By emigrating *families* the hardship of separating the young and strong from the old and feeble, and the risks resulting from the young of both sexes being left homeless and friendless in a foreign country would be obviated. At home, farms could then be consolidated with a fair chance of prosperity; this should be done systematically, on the following plan. There are in Ireland, as occupiers of land, 157,775 who hold from five to fifteen acres; these cannot possibly exist in any comfort, even if rent free; then there are 134,447 who hold from fifteen to thirty acres. If the former class were encouraged to emigrate by *families*, and their land were divided amongst the owners of fifteen to thirty acres, a more prosperous class of farmers would be created; but if no step in this direction is taken by the State, while a peasant proprietary is established without any check upon subdivision, pauperism, the result of over-crowding, will increase.

Another means of putting down anarchy would be the appointment of paid guardians in the districts where the elected guardians have raised the rates beyond reasonable limits, by subsidizing all Nationalist evicted tenants, the paid guardians to

be appointed by the Local Government Board, with power to control expenditure and restore the Union to a state of solvency.

Irish tenants are, as a rule, perfectly ignorant of all modern rules and systems of agriculture; a suggestion of improvement in any particular is generally met with the answer, "My father always did so," or "ever and always, this was the way," and improvements are looked upon as innovations to be suspected. About fifty years ago an Agricultural Society was started in Kerry by the landlords, and with good effect, as the farmers were encouraged by competition and prizes to give a trial to improvements; this Society lasted till 1876, when the first Land Act had had time to work, and in that year it dropped for want of funds. Landlords could no longer keep it up, and tenants were led to believe that they would gain more by spending their money on political agitation, than on the improvement of their cattle and crops. Schools should now be established in each province to teach a scientific system of farming; a small sum of £500 to £300, might be allocated to the endowment of Agricultural Societies in each county, and rewards given for the best cultivated farms; this would not only improve the land, but also raise the tone of morals and thought in the country, by creating a spirit of wholesome competition, and inducing the farmers to read agricultural papers instead of the poisonous literature, which is now their only mental food.

To secure the profits of agriculture and trade, it would be necessary to improve the railway system. Private companies undertaking railways as a speculation, have succeeded in England because the country is rich, the traffic enormous, and various lines act in unison. But in Ireland, which is a poor country where agriculture is backward, carriage very materially increases the cost of production. There are in Ireland 278 directors, 35 secretaries, and 38 traffic managers over a railway system, which has only about one-third of the traffic of the London and North Western Railway Company of England; and as many of the railway boards are opposed to each other, traffic is impeded, and the country suffers. If the State were to take up the railways of Ireland, with one central board of management in Dublin, working all the small railways in conjunction with the great arterial lines, traffic would be doubled, and the cost of management and conveyance would be considerably lessened.

In my next suggestion I feel that I am treading on dangerous ground. Still, having undertaken to suggest a remedy for Irish

discontent and anarchy, I must not shrink from offending the prejudices of some of the wise men of England.

Ireland is an agricultural country. There are in Ulster, as in England and Scotland, factories which support the greater portion of the population, and cause the prosperity of the province ; but outside of Ulster, cattle and butter are the staple products. And how does Ireland stand in her only market, England, as compared with other nations? She enjoys free trade in butter, no doubt ; and so do France and Holland ; but these countries, while they find an open market in England, tax all English and Irish productions, and being manufacturing countries themselves, they can afford to sell butter at so cheap a rate as to swamp Ireland's market. A slight protective duty on foreign butter would be hailed with gratitude in Ireland, and do more to allay discontent than any further acts of so-called "generosity."

Again, the great thinly-peopled countries of the West find in England a free market for cattle and flour, and America taxes very highly all English goods. Why not place Ireland on a par with America, by levying a slight protective duty on American beef and flour? Every little village in Ireland formerly had its flour mill, which worked up the corn grown in the country as well as imported grain. These mills are now generally idle, and the men who worked them ruined. A small duty on manufactured flour would restore this industry, and enable men with some capital to give employment to labour, and to work up in small quantities for the farmers, at a cheap rate, their home-grown corn, as well as to grind imported grain. Our own Colonies may have, no doubt, a right to object to our taxing their goods, but not so foreign countries.

The free-trade system of England would no doubt have been successful if reciprocated. But the question is worth considering, whether the English people do not now lose more by taxation resulting from the chronic state of rebellion in Ireland than she gains by bringing in American beef and flour, and foreign butter and butterine, free, to the impoverishment of Ireland, and of the agricultural portions of England and Scotland? "Remedial measures" for an agricultural country are certainly not those which spoil its market.

S. M. HUSSEY.

A Bargee's Sweetheart.

THE three forty-five horse-car, or tram as they call it there, had just gone jingling down the white road to Swinton, which ran at the bottom of the field lying in front of the Pendlebury Children's Hospital. A well-knit young fellow was walking up one of the little gravel paths that lead from the sweep of the carriage drive, between the square grass plots, to the "Patients' Visitors' door," in the side of the long central corridor, one blazing September afternoon. His moleskin trousers, and corduroy waiscoat made with sleeves, and faced with dark brown velveteen open below the top button, over a blue guernsey, made one at once feel sure that neither horses nor boats were totally unfamiliar to him. And lastly, the sealskin cap which he took off, and twirled in his great hands as he reached the door, would let any one who has ever walked on the towing-path of a canal, into the secret of his apparently double occupation.

John Thrupp was a bargee ; and a fine strapping young fellow : an easy six feet in his blue-worsted socks ; deep in the chest and with not an ounce of superfluous fat anywhere.

If his brow was low, with the hair that fell over it coarse and tan-coloured, it was broad and "stood upright," and the eyes under it were good, honest blue ones. The clean-shaved lips met firmly over two rows of strong white teeth, in a jaw heavy but not brutal. No one could call John Thrupp a lout, if he was a bargee ; and though he stooped a little from the shoulders, it wasn't the outcome of a slouchy nature in the man, but simply because he could, and did if necessary, drag, by a rope over his shoulder, a heavy lumbering barge that would puzzle many an upright Guardsman to stir. So far from being a lout, John Thrupp had two, at least, of the indispensable attributes of a gentleman. He was a man of his word, and he had a love of cleanliness—inside and out. That he paid his way—if only along

the towing-path of a canal,—and worked as hard as he had strength for, were, I think, two other very gentlemanly habits ; but many folk may think that I am quite wrong about this ; and as I want only to tell you a plain tale, we won't go into so disputed a subject any further. Mind you, I do not believe that all bargees are honest, or even clean ; I don't indeed :—but this particular bargee was.

He loved his cold plunge in the Broads at daylight, told the truth as unvaryingly, and enjoyed a clean shave as keenly as any gentleman stroke in a 'Varsity Eight.

Well ! This bargee turned a shade paler, in spite of his six feet and broad shoulders, as he caught sight of the rows of white beds, with the red-jacketed little forms in them, in the wards, on either side the path. He moistened his lips, and swallowed a little nervously, as he rung a bell beside the open doorway, that startled him by clanging just over his head. A brisk voice said :—

“Come in ; come straight on ;” and doing so, John found himself, after passing through a small receiving-room, in the long slate-paved corridor, with its fifty pale windows, and double sets of glass doors opening into the long branching pavilion wards. The corridor looked interminable, and the shafts of sunlight, slanting through the high windows on the right, seemed to cut its great length into diagonal strips.

Two doctors, in loose jackets and with bare heads, were standing at the far end talking ; but their voices did not reach to where John stood, a little dazed, and at a loss how to proceed. The same brisk voice, now close behind him, remarked :—

“Well ?” and paused.

John turned, and saw a blue-gowned, white-aproned figure, in a high white cap, sitting on a polished bench against the dark wall—looking for all the world like a blue-and-white china tile, set up against a dark oak shelf. The nurse—for it was a nurse—or at least a Probationer (and not a tile), had a pencil and book in her hands ; and without looking up, went on rapidly :—

“Who to see ? How many ? Only yourself ? No infection of any sort at home, I hope ; *whom* did you say ?” glancing at last up at poor John's puzzled face, with her pencil ready to put a cross against the patient he should ask for.

“A little girl ; at least a young girl,” said John. “Nancy

Battsen," adding a little unsteadily, "she was hurt—here," touching his own broad chest.

"Hayward Ward—in the Special," replied the nurse, getting up, and standing by John, to point up the corridor. "Go straight up to the statue and turn into the glass doors to the left, under the lantern in the roof."

"Thank you, ma'am," said John, going as directed; and then turned hesitatingly to her, and said: "How is she, miss, please?"

But the nurse did not know. She said she was "over on the other side, in Liebert," but that the Sister in Hayward would tell him.

Poor John did not understand at all what she meant, but he thanked her, and walked up the corridor as directed, lurching a little from side to side in his anxiety to prevent his great nailed boots making such an embarrassing noise.

Like all who are unaccustomed to life in a hospital, John thought every sound, even out there, in the corridor, must wake some poor soul. He looked at the two trim nurses, who passed him higher up, quite reproachfully for actually laughing and chattering so close to his poor little girl, who had been so nearly killed.

A sickening expectation, and almost terror, made John's hands cold and his eyes burn, as he turned into the first glass doors, and found himself in a shorter corridor, with linen-cupboards and a bright little ward kitchen, on one side; in front a long vista of polished boards, rows of beds, and white-covered tables. The afternoon sun streamed in and touched the shining jugs, and glass jars, and bunches of flowers, and the white-capped head of a nurse, who was bending over the nearest table, on which a huge pewter inkstand literally glistened, it had been so perseveringly burnished.

The closed door on his left opened, and the Sister, a tall thin woman, in a dark green serge gown, and a variation of the prevailing white cap on her white hair, came out, saying to the unseen occupant of the little eight-sided room within, "I don't think there is any one coming to see you, dear. It is nearly four, when the visitors go.—Unless," she said, facing John, "*this* is your brother. Have you come to see Nancy Battsen, young man?" she added.

"Yes, ma'am," said John; and the Sister stood on one side, and pushed open the door, and said, "Here's this brother of

ours at last." She turned to John, and added, "It is just as well you didn't come earlier. She mustn't talk much, nor move. You talk to her," and stepped swiftly across the slate-paved passage towards the ward; but paused as John, who stood in the doorway, looking at the little dark head on the pillow, in an agony of awkwardness, after a moment said :—

"She,—Nancy isn't my sister, ma'am. She's naught to me. At least she's,—my sweetheart! I had to come, as her father's had to go on with the boat."

"Very well," said the Sister, smiling, and disappearing.

"Sweethearts" were rare visitors, as this was a Children's Hospital.

Nancy was really two and a half years over the age-limit.

John creaked carefully across the floor, and sat down on the chair beside Nancy's bed and said :—

"Well, Nancy," in a voice so husky, one might have thought he was a man of feeling, and not "only a bargee!"

"Well, John," said the black-eyed little creature, whose dark curly head lay still on the pillow, though she put a rough little boy's hand into John's great fist. John noticed she had her yellow beads round her throat still, though she was wearing a washed-out blue flannel jacket belonging to the ward, which struck him strangely.

"Don't move your arms, Nancy dear," he said, speaking in almost a whisper, and not daring to clasp the hand laid in his. "Are you better?"

Nancy smiled up at him, still not moving, but pressing his hand a little, and said :—

"You be frightened of me, John! But I'm a lot better—I'm not drowned now, you silly!"

John smiled a little, for the first time since he had looked at her, and said :—

"Yes, I be frightened at you! You look so delicate, and such a little thing; and I don't seem to know you, lying abed like that."

"I don't lie abed much on the boat, do I?" said Nancy, the flush, which his coming had caused, fading, and leaving the little brown face suddenly.

"How's father, John?"

"He's gone on with the boat. It had to go, you know, so far as Bolton. He's coming on Wednesday to see yer,—back by train,—if you ain't out o' this by then, Nancy."

"Nay, I shan't be out," said Nancy, her eyes filling. "The lady—the Sister, I mean—says I'll have to lie still a good bit, because of my ribs. Did you know, John, when you pulled me out o' water, that the boat had gone agen me, and squeezed me agen the bridge, before I went under?"

John nodded, and putting his left hand over hers lying in his right, said huskily :—

"Did it hurt very bad, Nancy dear?" and then, breaking down altogether, poor John knelt by the bed, and laid his head on the iron at the top of the bed and sobbed like a child.

"Dont'ee, John, now dont'ee," said Nancy, the red blood coming like a wave into her face suddenly.

"It was not so very bad ; I was dazed, and didn't feel-like at all. Don't cry, John, I be a lot better, and it don't hurt now. I can't bear to have you cry," and the poor child's voice got rough, and great tears rolled over her cheeks, and she moved her hand to pull John's head down close to her, and whispered, "It was you who saved me, John, you know. Oh, don't cry so, John ; I'm better."

For a moment or two the poor fellow sobbed helplessly over his little crushed playfellow ; and then when she said, "You mustn't, John ; the lady can see through that little window, and she'll make yer go," he kissed the hand he was holding, and sat back in the chair, and looked pitifully at her, feeling a great helpless brute.

"John," said Nancy, shyly, after a moment, "what made you say I was your sweetheart, when I aint?"

"You are, Nancy ; I didn't know it myself till I come to tell the lady you was naught to me, and then I knowed you were everything, and all I've got to care for. When you come out of this, you'll be my sweetheart, won't you, Nancy?"

Nancy smiled with the tears hardly dry and said, "It did sound strange to hear you say out like that, 'She's my sweetheart!' But I think I be," she said after a moment, looking roguishly up at John, who leant over her and kissed her.

"Come home soon, Nancy," he said, "and I'll take better care of you. You shan't jump off the barge agen, nor get drowned no more."

The door opened to admit a doctor and the Sister. John stood up, and touched his forehead to the doctor, who nodded, and said :—

"Your sister's over the age, my man ; she ought to have been

taken to the Infirmary, but as we have taken her in, we must get her well. How old are you?" he added to the girl.

"I'm sixteen, and eight months, sir."

"Dear me, she don't look it, does she, Sister?"

"No," said the Sister, taking down a card that hung over the bed, and adding the age to it.

"It's the short curly hair makes her look so young, else she's a fine grown girl really."

"How came she to be brought here?" said the doctor, holding Nancy's wrist, and putting one foot up on the chair by the bed, resting his watch on his knee. He addressed John, but kept his eyes on Nancy's face, which was paling and flushing by turns.

"I was carrying her in my arms, after we got her out, sir, and her father says to the policeman, 'where ought we take my little girl, she's been nearly drowned and hurt?' 'Little girl?' says the policeman, 'take her to Gartside Street, the Children's Hospital, Out-patient's room, you know;' and so we does; and there was a van there, and they told us to get in, and we was drove here."

"Oh! I see," said the doctor, laying down the hand he held, and putting up his watch.

"So they took you for a real 'little girl,' instead of a big little girl. I daresay, Sister, you and C—— (mentioning the other surgeon) were only too delighted to get a good case into your Special, and forgot to ask the age! Any rise of temperature?" glancing at the chart over the bed.

"No," said the Sister.

"Takes her food well? Let's see, milk only, isn't it? Like it?" Nancy nodded.

"Yes," said Sister again, "and she sleeps well now."

"Oh! well she's doing very well," and turning to John, the doctor said those, to him, routine words, but which lifted a load off the poor fellow's heart: "If she lies still, and does as she's told, she'll pull through now; but you'd better not stop now talking to her, she's over-tired already. Say good-bye to your sister, and come to the out-patient room, and give me your address."

"She's my sweetheart, sir," said John slowly, looking at Nancy's downcast eyelids.

"Oh, ho!" said the doctor, glancing sharply from one to the other. "Then most certainly it's time you went. You're far too interesting a visitor for our patient." But being a man of quick sympathy, and although he was a doctor and "man of

science," having a sweetheart of his own, he called the Sister outside the door as he left, to give the young things a moment to themselves, while he impressed upon her that Nancy must on no account attempt to move.

"We shall have some mischief with that broken rib, unless we look out. But, so far, she's doing splendidly."

John caught the last words as he too came out, and how they altered the look of things for him!

When he had entered that room, he dreaded to look at his poor—as he thought dying playmate. Now! He straightened himself up, and smiled back at Nancy, who kissed her hand to him in the doorway. Nancy, who was really getting well, and would soon be coming out, all right. And she was no longer his playmate, but was his little sweetheart; and they had kissed each other.

This bargee looked a different man, as he stepped briskly down the corridor behind the doctor, feeling inclined to join in the whistling of, "*My love is young and fair*," in which the young house-surgeon was indulging.

When he was going out into the glare of the sunshine on the gravel, after giving the particulars about Nancy's father, and his profession, John looked straight at the doctor, standing bare-headed on the steps, and said:—

"I'll be very grateful to you, sir, if you'll cure her;" and added by a sudden inspiration, "she's all I've got to love, and I'll do anything for you if you'll get her well, sir. I'm going to have a barge of my own next spring, and I'll take better care of her after this."

"Oh! so Miss Nancy is to be Mrs. John Thrupp, is she?" laughed the doctor.

"Yes, she is, sir," returned John, laughing too out of the joy and relief at his heart.

As he ran down the road to catch the tram that came jingling up, the clatter of the horses' hoofs and the bells on the harness seemed to repeat the doctor's capital suggestion, "Mrs. John Thrupp!"

The next visiting-day, Sunday, John Thrupp was again going from Manchester to Pendlebury, on the top of the tram, to see Nancy. He was earlier this time. The clock of Pendleton church struck three as they passed. He remembered that, as he passed it again, going back. There was no one on the bench

that side of the car, and John leaned back with both arms over the seat, and his hat tilted back off his forehead, enjoying the sunshine and easy swinging progress of the car. It was like the gliding of his barge, but emphasized by the regular trot, trot of the horses. As the road grew pretty and tree-shaded after the change of horses at Pendleton, his thoughts went back to the long summer afternoons he and Nancy had so often spent together, leaning over the side of her father's barge, as they slipped slowly through the water below, which was painted with little dabs of blue and red and yellow reflections, of the gorgeous Windsor Castle that decorated the barge stern, and in return threw little curls and flashes of light over the ideally green lawns and woods of the picture.

He and old Battsen, his cousin, were partners in this barge—the 'Get Away,' and lived on board. Nancy lived on shore with her widowed sister, in one of the many little red-brick cottages that cluster along the various "cuts" of the canals all over England. They generally plied backwards and forwards on the Grand Junction Canal, near Uxbridge, among flat meadows and pollard willows. It was quite an exception for her to have to come all the way to Manchester as she had done this time, and she had slept on shore each night, in the rough lodgings to be had along the canals—with old Battsen. But she spent all her days on the 'Get Away,' keeping house, as she called it, for her father; peeling the potatoes and washing up the mugs in the gaily painted tin basins, and keeping the little cabin as neat as a man-o'-warsman. Sometimes she donned her great check sun-bonnet, and with a little red-and-black plaid shawl pinned across her bosom, and a clean white apron—the outdoor full-dress costume of a tidy barge lass—she steered, or walked along the path behind "Old Soldier," the steady, powerful old grey, who patiently trudged along in all weathers, dragging the capacious monkey-boat with its varying loads. He didn't need guiding, not even in the locks into which he drew the barge, and then stood, slowly munching out of his nose-bucket, which Nancy kept like silver, till he heard old Battsen's epigrammatic but comprehensive order—"G' up, Sodger."

Then on he went again, gradually drawing the slack rope out of the water, dripping, and whipping the surface till it finally stretched out taut, and the barge slowly glided out of the lock. He knew exactly what to do without Nancy's "Now then, my general!" "Quick march, cap'en!" or "Halt, Soldier!"

She used to declare that he minded being called "Soldier" more than a flick with the short-handled whip. He had been an officer's horse, and was offended at being spoken to like a "common trooper."

John smiled as he remembered how Nancy's laugh and the pat she gave "Soldier" with her little wet hand reached him, as she said that. They were just coming out of the lock below Uxbridge; they had a cargo of unbroken flints that time, and he remembered as he jumped on board, after working the lock-gates, just as she said it, the splash with which one of the queer-shaped, white and steely flints, displaced by his foot, went into the canal.

The sunny picture his slow fancy had called up was suddenly followed by the remembrance of that other cold drizzling evening a week ago, when it was Nancy who jumped lightly from the barge to the path, as they went under the bridge at Salford. John sat up suddenly, and for a moment felt sick and cold as he heard again the splash and quick little frightened cry with which Nancy disappeared in the water, black, in the thick shadow of that hideous arch. She had taken the jump scores of times, but this time she just missed the bricked edge of the path, and before her father, who was at the helm, could get at her, she went under.

John, who was several yards ahead with the horse, saw her rise again between the slowly approaching barge and the brick path, to which she clung; but before he could reach her and draw her out of the water, a spasm of anguish on the girl's pale face, and one long choked scream told him that the great lumbering barge had passed just one inch too near the edge and had crushed, as it passed, the slight form.

"Oh, good God!" muttered John, and drew his breath sharply through his teeth; even now it was all over and Nancy getting better, he couldn't think of it without shuddering.

How he dived under the barge and drew out the now inanimate little body and lifted it to the many hands stretched out on the path; how he and her father, white and shaking with horror, took their silent, lifeless burden to Gartside Street, he did not clearly remember.

He remembered the policeman's face clearly. A pale face, showing blue where the chin was shaved; and he remembered too that Nancy's curls dripped on to the back of his hand in the ambulance carriage, as she lay, wrapped in blankets, across

her father's knee. But after his own plunge into the water everything seemed confused, and the things done and said were like the unreal acts and words of a horrible dream.

"But she's all right *now*," said John to himself, "and when she's Mrs. John Thrupp she shan't run no more risks;" and he gave himself a shake to pull himself together before he got off the tram when it stopped on the white road below the Hospital.

He joined the group of mothers and fathers and friends, each with their bundles of clothes, eggs, and flowers, for the patients, going in twos and threes up the slope. Some, as he had done last week, were going for the first time, and looked about them curiously; but our bargee strode on quickly, smelling the huge bunch of stocks and wall-flowers and mignonette he was taking Nancy. He knew his way, and nodded to the man at the lodge as if he were an old friend.

It was the same blue-and-white nurse on duty as portress, and John came in briskly out of the sunshine into the cool grey corridor, and took off his cap with quite a gallant smile, as he said, before the nurse spoke this time,

"To see Nancy Battsen,"—and quite proud of his knowledge, added, "in Haywood Special, ain't it? Only myself, please miss."

The nurse said "Yes," and added "Oh!—Mr. Battsen."

"John Thrupp," said John, smiling still.

"Oh!—yes," said the nurse. "Mr. Thrupp, wait a moment, please."

John stood on one side, wondering what she wanted with him, and watched her send a cabman and his wife, who asked for "Johnny Mahoney—a baby," to "North Ward." John wondered idly what was the matter with "Johnny Marney," as the anxious parents called it.

When they turned and went off to the right, John looked after them, and did not notice the momentary hesitation and glance of pity the little blue-and-white nurse cast on him as she laid her book on the bench, and got up and said—

"Will you come this way, Mr. Thrupp?"

"Has she been moved out of there?" said John, following, as they came opposite the Hayward doors.

"The doctor wants to speak to you," replied the nurse, without answering him, and opened the door of the room into which the doctor had taken him last time.

The doctor was sitting the other side of a square, green leather table, and looked up absently from his writing; and then, as

John said cheerily: "Good day, sir," he seemed suddenly to recognize the young fellow. A worried look came into his face, and he said:—

"Oh it's you; wait a moment," and getting up quickly, he followed the nurse out of the room, turning to add as he closed the door, "Sit down, I'll be back in a moment."

John sat down a little puzzled; but not a shade of anxiety, or fear that his Nancy was worse crossed his mind. He had made up his mind she was nearly well by now, and pictured her, sitting up now perhaps in a long arm-chair he had seen in the Special. The door opened again, and the doctor came in, looking very grave indeed; and shutting the door, stood with his back to it, and said:—

"Mr. Thrupp, I am very much distressed to find you have not had the message I sent to Gartside Street last night; I quite thought you had it."

"What message, sir?" said John, suddenly frightened at the doctor's grave tone. "I didn't think to go and ask for no message—she was getting better—she ain't no *worse*, is she, sir? She ain't bad agen, is she, doctor?"

"My poor fellow," said the doctor, his own face paling a little, "I wish you had gone to enquire. She got much worse yesterday afternoon; before we wired she tried to sit up, poor child, and hæmorrhage, internal hæmorrhage, set in."

And he hesitated again, and looked pityingly at poor John; and again went on hurriedly:

"We thought you'd get the wire and be prepared. She sank rapidly. There was no pain, but we could do nothing. She died about midnight."

John sat on very still, with his cap in hands, between his knees, staring at the doctor, who laid his hand tenderly on his shoulder, and was saying something else, but he didn't hear what. The whole room, the whole world, seemed throbbing with those few words—"she died about midnight."

Half an hour after, John Thrupp, bargee, was slowly walking back to Manchester with a little parcel of girl's garments under his arm, and a string of yellow beads clasped tight in his great right hand, seeing only the white face of his dead sweetheart painted against the cruel pitiless streets and hurrying crowds of Manchester.

"And she was better o' Wednesday!" he was muttering, half aloud.

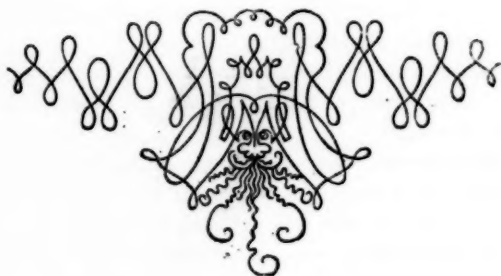
"She was better o' Wednesday."

That night John and old Battsen were sitting one on each of the bunks of the little cabin of the 'Get Away,' with an oil lamp between them. The old man was crying bitterly for his dead little girl, reiterating how "he'd ha' gone to see her, if you'd not 'a said she were better." John sat still in dumb misery, after telling the old man all there was to tell; and they had spoken too, about the funeral.

"Ye see, it's worse for me nor for you," said poor old Battsen, selfish as we all often are in our sorrow. "She was my only little 'un, and beyond sort 'o cousin, she weren't naught to you."

"No," said John, putting Nancy's yellow beads away in his breast-pocket; "she weren't nothing to me, but she were going to be. She were going to be Mrs. John Thrupp—some day—poor lass!"

E. HARRISON CLUBBE.



Playgoing in China and Japan.

I.—IN CHINA.

IT is remarkable that in two countries conspicuous for artistic culture and a refined taste, the Art Dramatic should lag so far behind her sisters. The Middle Kingdom vies with that of the Rising Sun in the brilliancy and delicacy of its porcelain, the exquisite finish of its bronzes, the gorgeous elaboration of its embroideries. For these the Western barbarian can find naught but admiration. When, in China or Japan, he pays a visit to the theatre his wonder is of another kind, for it seems incredible that peoples who have progressed so far in various directions can fall so short in another which should be akin. Yet the bulk of both Chinese and Japanese adore the theatre. Unlike us, the white-faces, who protest if a performance spreads beyond three hours, they are content to deposit themselves for the day, arriving at early dawn with food and drink, tobacco, and a party of friends prepared to be amused till midnight.

It was in the native quarter of Hong-kong that I had my first opportunity of witnessing a Chinese play, where performances happily are short, in obedience to the British regulations. A particularly eminent strolling company was advertised to appear for a few nights, and the appreciation of the promised treat was evinced by a crowded house. Although the place of honour facing the stage had been retained on the opening night for the party of which I formed one, we had been warned that empty boxes are a temptation to the lawless who find themselves unduly squeezed. Punctual, therefore, to the appointed time, we were received with much ceremony and chin-chinning by the proprietor of the establishment, who ushered us through a rude lobby and up a flight of greasy stairs, and presenting us with a large key, departed.

Having opened a rough door, we found ourselves in the auditorium, which was already crowded to suffocation. The air

was redolent of Chinese odours (blessed is the man who knows them not!); the heat and closeness were oppressive; the noise deafening. The audience was there, but the stage—unconcealed by any curtain—showed no signs of preparation. On the placard without, it was stated that the actors would play, provided the sea was calm and the wind fair; and turning to a Chinese gentleman, who was to act as interpreter, I suggested that some mishap must have befallen the travellers. "Not so," he said, with a superior and indulgent smile for the ignorance of the abject foreigner; "the actors are a little late, but so soon as they arrive they will not keep the audience waiting."—"But," I argued, "there is nothing on the stage except a posse of juvenile roughs, who, entrenched there, are gnawing nuts and oranges." Indeed, things did not look promising. We saw in front of us a bare, narrow, empty shelf, raised some three feet above the floor, with a central window between two open doorways at the back. No properties, or scenery, or lamps, or furniture. It was just such a stage as may be seen at home in a low-class provincial music-hall. "Our players use no scenes," explained the cicerone, "and carry their necessities with them. Examine the audience while we wait."

The crowd before us was well worth study; a singular gathering; strange and outlandish to a tourist but recently arrived in China. The auditorium consisted of a vast square space, with plain raftered roof and two wide galleries superposed—a lofty hall of fine proportions, as undecorated as an English barn. Rows of benches occupied the floor, with a passage running round the walls, supplemented at either end by a small flight of steps for convenience of access to the stage. The lower gallery, divided into sections by posts and rails, was filled with the well-to-do—a wonderful parterre of bright-hued silks, scarlet, pale blue, tea-green, russet, lavender—in fine contrast with the line of flat yellow faces and black pigtailed. On the upper gallery—wider, overhanging like a house-roof,—were perched in squatting masses a dense throng of blue-cottoned coolies, smoking, gesticulating, and chattering with such a hubbub of chaotic jabber as seemed to foreshadow riot. By degrees, as the air became more loaded, the loose clothing was peeled off, and ere the evening was half over there was above us a sea of yellow bodies, dimly seen through smoke, a medley of wriggling bare arms and legs, with not a garment visible. A turbulent set of semi-savages, quarrelsome and noisy, are the burly coolies

of Hong-kong. To let off steam pent by long waiting, there was kept up a fusillade of rough banter, a peppering fire of chaff and repartee from left to right, amid showers of pea-nuts and orange-peel, varied now and then by a combined diversion in favour of those upon the platform. If uproarious, the assembly was in the best of humours. Meanwhile the silk-robed occupants of the first gallery sat dumbly puffing opium, gently fluttering fans, as passionless as dolls, deaf as well as blind, as unconscious of the flow of time as of the crackling artillery of laughter.

Suddenly, there was brief silence, then a roar. All heads were turned to the stage, from which the host of little boys was swept as with a broom into the laps of those below. A procession of coolies staggered across, bamboo on shoulder, each bearing two swinging burdens. Chairs, tables, huge travelling-chests, gaudily painted, went surging up the side steps, across the platform, through the doors, followed by a mob in simple garb. Here was the company at last, preceded by goods and chattels, arriving like the players in "Hamlet." Our cicerone was right. It was not the way of the actors to keep an audience waiting. In a surprisingly brief space the chests were deposited in a room behind, and—as could be discerned through the central window—rapidly unpacked. Lights moved to and fro. By-and-bye ladies in robes of many colours could be seen daubing visages before small mirrors, while in front of the barred window the orchestra took their places. At one side a party of men rigged up in a trice a tent (dormitory of the performers), while others untied and disposed the furniture. Lanterns, and candles in sconces, were now being hung and lighted; then, with a banging of cymbals, drums, and tomtoms, the musicians ushered in the actors.

In China, where everything dates back a thousand years or so, there is no desire for novelty. Every one knows by heart the dramatic repertoire, nor craves for new-fangled pabulum. A board bearing a list of available pieces is hung upon a nail; the leading performer comes forward, hands well tucked away in sleeves, and enquires the public choice. Some well-known personage amongst the audience takes on himself, as Mr. Town did in the days of George II., to act as mouthpiece, and after a few minutes spent in searching out needed properties, the performers enter and commence. Each begins on his entrance by explaining who he is—a necessary detail for the refreshing of memory where there are no programmes—and then, amid a never-

ceasing din of wood and brass, the tale unfolds itself. Not without interruption, though, albeit a play is undivided. As there is no curtain, so also are there no acts; performers coming in and out of the two doors—the thread of the story never broken—until their work is finished.

There is no attempt at grouping or artistic disposition of the characters, for there are always many on the stage who have nothing to do with the play. To a stranger it is difficult to tell who is engaged in the action and who is not, for the stage being low and unencumbered by floats, the occupants of the front seats are constantly climbing up and down, sauntering at the sides or into the green-room, conversing with actors or talking to the musicians. It is therefore necessary, without interfering more than is needful with the freedom of the promenaders, to place janitors at either door, to keep them clear for entrances and exits. A casual buzz of talk does not interfere with the performance, for the performers yell and shout. It is no easy matter to determine who of those upon the stage are visible and who are not. There are men, dressed like ordinary coolies, whose business it is, flitting hither and thither, to place chairs or properties and to remove them; to change the large labels hanging on the wall, which announce "this is a wood," or "this is a palace;" to arrange a set of curtains, when required, upon bamboo rods, which drop into sockets at the backs of the chairs, whereby a window is indicated, or a bed, or doorway. These servants are conventionally understood to be invisible.

It being conceded that there is to be no attempt at actual illusion, that a heavy tax is to be placed upon the imaginative faculties, one is tempted to wonder why special costumes should not also be dispensed with. Where are we to draw the line? If a label is to do instead of scenery, why should not a ticket hanging from a button announce that the wearer is a prince or minister, or simple citizen? The Chinese carry the principle of *convention* bewilderingly far. A set code of attitudes and movements are understood by a pigtailed audience to indicate certain things. Thus, a raising of one leg and a half-turn (vaguely suggesting the act of getting into the saddle), implies that the character is on horseback; a crescendo of gong-beating and a quick walk round, informs spectators that the performers have moved to another place—what place is told on the changed label. A lady who is supposed to be sewing goes through the required action, but imagines needle and thread.

On the other hand, costume is a matter of vast import, and the subject of great care and consideration. The dresses are superb, magnificently embroidered, as interesting from an archæological as an artistic point of view ; for it is usual (convention again) to attire stage heroes and heroines in garments of the period that preceded the invasion of the Tartars ; a time when the mighty Ming Emperors held sway, when the nobles vied with each other in gorgeousness and eccentricity. This fantastic raiment is, I am told, scrupulously correct down to the smallest detail of button or tassel ; while as to artistic labour, no trouble or expense is spared in rich silk and cunning gold work.

As the play proceeds, actors who are not yet on, or who are waiting for the next piece, may be seen lounging in the green-room, peering through the grille-window, opium-pipe in mouth—*invisible*, till they enter on the scene. Those who are not required at all, have calmly gone to bed long since. Glimpses of half-naked bodies coiled on mats may be obtained through the opening of the side-tent, sleeping peacefully despite the exertions of the orchestra. Oh ! if those musicians were as merciful as strong ! But Chinamen are not troubled with nerves, and delight in diabolical din. A play unaccompanied by a clatter that is so soul-harrowing and ceaseless as to cause actors to bellow with all their force of lungs, would be but a paltry pleasure. The words are spoken in a conventional recitative, or series of shouts, which is only broken in declamatory speeches. Females employ a high monotonous falsetto, walk with a peculiar sway of haunches and swing of arms and mincing steps—this to accentuate a difference of sex, all the performers being men. It is strange that, trammelled by so many disadvantages, choked and stifled by artificiality, the acting should be so good. Gesture is graceful and fitting ; by-play is excellently suggestive, combined with dignified repose. Faces assume such fine and varying expression as one would not look for on the flat yellow visages of Mongols ; the important tirades, though bawled in a high key, are delivered with a just sense of musical elocution and relative value of sentences.

Since others were walking in and out unchecked, we determined to visit the green-room, and descending the grimy stair, pushed our way along the greasy wall, till, reaching the steps, we clambered on to the platform. While passing between the actors across the stage towards the door, I inadvertently touched the long feather of an empress, who in shrill squeaks

was wailing bitterly, whereupon, abandoning her rôle, she turned and abused me with voluble invective; then taking up the thread again, continued the recital of her woes. A singular and interesting spectacle this green-room, which suggested an Oriental rendering of Hogarth's "Strollers in a Barn." Some were ready dressed and some were naked. Beards, wigs, boots, were hanging on long strings; amazing head-dresses—some four feet high and more—occupied a shelf. The nimble wardrobe-keeper had already unpacked most of the huge chests, and the glittering array of robes lay carefully arranged in heaps. Specimens of the very finest needlework, such as rarely arrive in Europe, causing the mouth to water. "Would he sell any of them?" I asked. "Certainly not," he replied, grinning; for some had actually been worn by defunct emperors, hundreds of years ago. They were wondrously fresh, considering how constantly they were tossed about in dirty booths and barracks, worn by strollers no cleaner than Celestials usually are.

The comedy, by this time half over, was to be followed by a military spectacle, to which end a curious collection of "Ming" uniforms awaited their wearers. The trappings of generals, ministers, soldiers, nobles, resembled in no wise the Chinese costume of to-day. Celestial fashions alter little, but on the fall of the Ming dynasty there was a revolution in attire. Then it was that the shaven pate and the pigtail, which now they cherish with deep affection, was imposed as a badge of slavery; then it was that coolies were clothed in loose short jackets, women in wide trousers. The Tartar conquerors, by the way, have never been able to cope with the ladies. In spite of edicts, threats of pains and penalties, nothing will induce the fair sex of the central and southern provinces to give up the crushing of their toes. Husbands, they are told by the marriage-makers, prefer wives with feet like lotus-buds, and floral extremities they will have, if the result may be achieved by zeal. It was interesting to remark that alone of all classes the dress of the Imperial family remains unchanged. In this the tyrants themselves gave way, for the Brother of the Moon and Cousin of the Firmament is too sublime a being to vary the cut of his clothes. Just as the Japanese Mikado is so exalted that no human scheme of ornament is good enough for him, and he therefore occupies saloons of severely unadorned simplicity, so is it in a measure with the Lord of the Middle Kingdom. The tall kingfisher hat of the Empress, with its numberless bobs of floss silk and its twin

pheasant plumes, five feet in length, was lying there awaiting the "actress" who was to wear it—the self-same coiffure, true to the Ming period, that is assumed by the Empress of to-day. It was certainly a whimsical sight, that green-room ; picturesque, if somewhat revolting. The nonchalance of the "young ladies" in the presence of so many strangers was edifying. Their heads and faces hideously made up with a thick paste—a plaster of red and white—to imitate those of real women after a dim conventional fashion, they stood cooling themselves and puffing pipes, while dressers sought out their costumes ; some of them lounged against chests, holding forth their nails to be gilded. One could no longer marvel at the frequency of conflagrations in Chinese theatres. It was the thing, before confronting a new audience, to burn joss paper, and thus enlist in the cause of success gods and departed ancestors. Bits of half-consumed paper, therefore, *littered* the place, smouldering in the corners of the dry wooden structure. Little opium-lamps glimmered half-buried under dresses and properties ; while actors were making up their faces with grease-paints before dips stuck on the floor, where they were left to burn themselves out. Grease paints, by the way, which have come into use among us quite recently, have travelled westward with a host of other unacknowledged conveniences from China, where these pigments have been employed for centuries. The members of the company were civil enough when addressed, though shy and awkward, for the actor's status in China is of the lowest, and no person of superior rank, except a barbarian, would be seen in converse with them.

But now there is a rush from the stage and the room is full. The crush and heat, and babble and stench, are overpowering. Gongs and cymbals bang, trumpets blare with a new lease of energetic uproar. The comedy is ended, and all hands are required for the spectacle. Forty people, or so, are employed in it, and they scamper like fiends about the narrow platform, waving flags and banners, screaming and shouting one another down in a delirious carnival of din. It is a sort of *ballet d'action* interspersed with dialogue. Enter like a whirlwind through one door a general and staff. A marvellous creature is the general, clad in cloth of gold, much trimmed with fish and monsters, chains of coral and amber. His face is deeply furrowed, and daubed scarlet to alarm the foe. His long boots are of black satin, with thick white soles that raise him three inches from the ground. Stuck into a wide belt behind are four yellow flags

adorned with dragons, that give a suggestion of wings fluttering as he leaps and wheels and spins, with an indescribable picturesqueness of effect. He announces with howls of combative derision that the Tartars are hard by with designs on the Land of Flowers. They must be swept from the earth, and promptly. Shrieks of assent; wild war-dance; exit, followed by an admiring retinue. Tremendous noise of gongs that is like to drive us mad, while our Celestial cicerone leans back entranced, whispering that his soul revives. Enter, with a fanfare by the opposite door, rival general and army. Shouts, menaces, war-dance, exeunt. Musicians straining every sinew with more success than ever. Our Chinese friend is enchanted now, roused from genteel lethargy. His oblique eyes sparkle; his thin lips are parted; he strokes his pigtail lovingly. Simultaneous entrance of both generals and armies, with a frenzy of menace. They whisk about, waving banners and bamboo-spears, while the orchestra grow black in the face.

The rapid movement of so many on so small a surface is complicated, but skilfully accomplished and effective. The generals, Homeric heroes, fight in single combat, and splendid they look with their breadth of fiery action, their flag-wings flying, and towering head-gear swaying. It is a drawn battle seemingly, for after a skirmish, in which all take part, each army dashes through its door and vanishes, while an attendant places two tables, each with a chair on it, and another changes the scene-label. Then enter mournfully Empress and train of ministers. They all solemnly climb upon the table, then she upon the chair. A screen of banners is deftly fitted round to suggest battlements. 'Tis plain they are in a beleaguered city. Enter on the other side Tartar general and rabblement. He climbs on the vacant chair and table, and strikes a defiant attitude. Evidently an improvised throne on a battlefield below the city walls. Parley; dialogue; banging of gongs; he dictates terms which cause her Majesty to weep. That battle, then, must have been a victory, though there was no sign of dead or dying. All climb down from eminences; general struts out, the others slowly following. While the furniture is being removed there is another change of scene-label. Enter Emperor, who goes forthwith to bed on two chairs, with curtains arranged as a canopy. He is sick unto death, and, groaning dismally, appears crushed by misfortune. He summons a soothsayer, who raises ghosts. The ghosts are good, and might well be

dovetailed into a British pantomime, for each is of a colour—clothes, head, hands—white, red, blue, or green, diapered with abstruse designs.

Now that the supernatural has been introduced, confusion reigns unchallenged, and it becomes impossible to disentangle the rest. Being somewhat well primed in Celestial history, I guess that the spectacle represents the invasion of the Tartars, and that the sick gentleman in bed is the last of the line of Ming. Defeated and undone, he will hang himself presently within the yellow kiosk of Mei-Shan, in the Imperial pleasaunce at Peking. The ghosts skip nimbly, but apparently fail to convey comfort thereby to the stricken one; so his Majesty, dismissing them in time-honoured Imperial fashion by the unrolling of a sleeve, gets out of bed (whither he had retired in his boots), ties an imaginary cord about his neck, attaches it to an imaginary beam, gurgles, puts out his tongue with head hanging on one side, and then—quietly walks away. His rôle is finished, since he is dead. There is no curtain to conceal his body. It is less trouble to walk than to be carried. What would Mr. Irving say to this specimen of tragedy—he who is wont to thrill us with realistic deaths? What would the Chinese say to the last scene of the “Bells” or “Louis XI.” as portrayed at the Lyceum? Would they be shocked or wonder-struck? These actors are true to their canon. *There is to be no illusion.* We are too intelligent to be deceived by mimic anguish. Death is to be as conventional as everything else. We are pleased and interested, but not harrowed—at least I suppose we are, for we are silently reflective for awhile, then flutter fans like the rustling of many leaves, and murmur approvingly, “Ho! ho!”

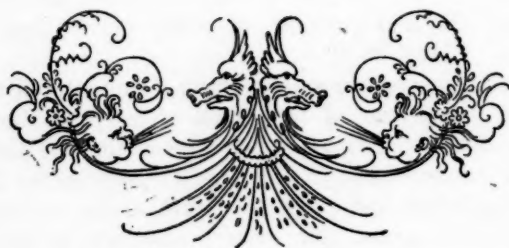
In witnessing so crude and infantile a dramatic effort as this is, despite its gleams of individual talent, our thoughts are irresistibly drawn backward to the days of the Old Globe. We may fairly suppose that in the time of Shakspeare the art of stage management had progressed just as far as this. Males took female characters. No scenery was used, or drop-curtain. As in all other matters connected with art, industry, education, the Chinese were at one moment more forward than other nations, then suddenly stopped, satisfied with supposed perfection, and amuse us now with pictures of our own embryo condition three hundred years ago.

Permanent theatres are few in China. Even in the great

cities of Canton, Foochow, and Soochow, strollers seek out an empty space, run up with incredible celerity huge erections of bamboo, covered with rice-straw mats, and adorned with many lanterns ; play for a few nights, then vanish, bag and baggage. There are one or two companies, I am told, composed entirely of females ; but these are not approved. Indeed, the theatre, in any phase, receives from the upper class but scant encouragement. Now and then a rich mandarin who gives a feast employs players to make a noise at the other end of the guest-chamber, but they receive no more attention than a band at a London dinner. More often a travelling troupe is engaged by the lord of the soil to perform upon his ground for the behoof of his many followers. The coolies enjoy the spectacle gratis, but their lord is conspicuous for absence. Chinese plays are so broad, that they are contemned by the fastidious, their interpreters despised by the cultured ; hence the ranks of the profession come to be recruited from the lowest class, and the national drama of China has, at least for the present, no chance of raising its tone.

LEWIS WINGFIELD.

(To be concluded next month.)



Hester's Shed.

BY AN OLD "WET BOB."



LET me be accurate. There is no Shed, still less is there a Hester. But in my now, alas, far distant youth, the shed existed, and in the still more remote youth of others I am assured that Hester also had a being. Rumour says she was a man ; but what will rumour not say ? let us be romantic while we may.

Both are now lost to the present generation who rule that portion of the stream where the zigzag, perplexing navigation marked out by them as "the right side of the river," might bewilder Father Thames himself.

Bless their dear young hearts, what a joyous manly training for life it is, I say, as I lay aside my punt-pole, and my bobbing-float, and moor myself opposite to the vacant site of the vanished shed, with my long-sight spectacles on my nose, and my sympathies all alive for the teeming youth about me.

The sun is getting low, throwing dazzling gleams on to the water, and a pink light on to the low red roofs, and the majestic pile of towering buildings in the background.

A train whirls past over the iron one-span bridge, and sounds of a steam-organ in the distance tell of the never-ceasing merry-go-rounds and boat-swings, occupied at this hour by dozens of white-jacketed stalwart Guardsmen. Boys these also, most of them ; fine, well-set-up boys, ready to fight, ready to play, ready for any mischief that comes uppermost.

I sit in my punt, with my thoughts roused by the familiar old strike of the clock across the meadows, flying far away back over years of service in many climes, to the proud day in my life when Swift and I won the pulling (have I not the silver oar on my study table even now ?), and my tutor flying along

the bank by Hester's Shed yonder, shouted triumphantly, "well pulled, Tozer ; well pulled, Swift. Keep it up."

Ah poor Swift, little did I then think that a few years later I should be reading the Burial Service in a strange land over my dear old chum, and writing home to break the news to his poor little wife and his orphan boy. His grandsons are here now. May they be as good fellows as my Stroke ! And I—I sit alone in my punt, and watch a pair of young legs skimming along the bank over there. Bare young legs and long, protruding from trowsers cut off at the knee ; a striped white flannel jacket and flannel cap to match.

"Put me across, please," shouts a cracked young voice to a waterman in a punt a little above me. Like a feather he lights in the punt, and presently on the top of a pollard willow the jacket and cap form a silhouette against the setting sun, and the long bare legs hang down each side of the gnarled old stem.

More bare legs, more flannel jackets. To one of these I shout, "What is it to-night ?" "Trial heats, school sculling," answers a bass voice out of a slender body, as he swings along. "How many starters ?" I shout once more.

"Four," comes back from the distance ; "they are all out now."

I jump to my feet, regardless of a suspicion of gout in that left toe ; I seize my punt-pole (a first-rate one, carefully selected. "'Alf a guinea to most, but four-and-six to *you*, sir," had said the provider), and I shove with all my might to a bend in the stream higher up, whence I can command a view of much of the course.

A distant roar of voices warns me they are coming. Two outriggers first glide into view, and at the same moment the gate on the towing-path swings open, and through it comes a swarm of shouting boys tearing along the bank, and Pandemonium is here. "Well sculled, Dobson." "*Well sculled, Armitage.*" "Well sculled, PEARSON." "Well SCULLED, Brown." "Pull your right ; your *right*, you fool !" "Pull your left—now both ; that's right—good indeed !" and the bare-legged runners who have been waiting, each to steer some special friend through the intricacies of this point, now run for their lives alongside, shouting their warnings and encouragements.

One trips over a stump and falls headlong, but is up again and off like a bird. How well that leading fellow is sculling, good form all round, good luck be with him. I long to shout

like the enthusiastic youngsters tailing along the bank opposite. My heart brisks up, my throat seems to have a big lump in it, and my glasses turn oddly misty.

An angry shout rises from both sides of the water, directed at a gandering pleasure-boat in the very middle of the course. "You're the wrong side of the *river*. Get out of the *way*. Come over this side—THIS SIDE. Ah!!! Yah!!! Get out of the Wa—y!"—but the occupants smile blandly and point out to each other the swarming boys and the advancing outriggers, and suddenly, with an awkward turn of their heavy randan, they run plump into the leading boat, and I, dancing wildly in my punt, roar out, "Stupid idiots, they have lost him his lead."

On sweeps the race, and the randan comes complacently down towards me. I glare at the occupants through my spectacles, saying savagely, "You have spoilt *that* poor fellow's chance, anyway," and to my horror perceive that the steering lines are held by a lady I know.

She smiles sweetly at me. "Ah, General Tozer," she says, "what a *nice* little boat you have got. Do you row it yourself? *What* a crowd, isn't it?"

"Trial heats," I snap out. "School sculling."

"Oh, indeed," she answers. "The Eton and Harrow match, I suppose. Who has won?"

"Not the leading boat *now*," I answer grimly, in spite of myself.

"No?" she says benignly; "perhaps that was the stupid boy who ran into us. He ought to have had me to steer him. I do love steering, don't you?"

A rapid survey of the state of affairs convinces me that she will do precisely the same thing again if I allow her to move, and the yells in the distance are coming once more nearer and nearer. So, with my hand on the boat, I ask inane questions about London gossip, and invent a purely fictitious piece of scandal without names; to which she replies, with a tap of her parasol, "So *you* know that *too*, you bad man! I have known it for weeks." I knew she would say that.

Here they come again; the boy I wanted to win hopelessly second.

He can never make up that lost ground, though he makes a plucky fight for it. But what's the good of explaining that to a woman who doesn't know a wet bob from a dry?

"Well sculled! Well sculled indeed!" shout his admirers;

and I, leaving hold of the boat now, lay my chalk-stony fingers alongside of my mouth, and bawl out to my own satisfaction, "Well sculled indeed!"

The third and fourth are long behind; the fourth and smallest boy severely pumped. "*Don't* shut up, oh *don't* shut up," bellow his friends, and the game little fellow, with his chin in his chest and his teeth clenched, struggles on to the bitter end.

Half an hour later the river swarms with boats of all sizes. Here comes a novice eight, with steerer standing upright, balanced by the lines in his hands stretched out behind him, coaching his crew with many adjurations. "Eyes in the boat, Four," he cries. "Row straight, Two—that's better—not so fast—don't feather so high. All together—good. Easy all—come forward—are you ready? Go." And off they spurt again in much improved form.

"Look ahead," sings out a flaxen-haired shrimp in an outrigger, with shoulders right up to his ears, and arms and elbows like spider's legs. I long to coach that eager youngster; to flatten his back and put his hands right on his skulls. Indeed, for the matter of that, I should like to flatten a few other backs and make the stroke a trifle smoother, and stop that twist of their body. But, bless their hearts, they have time enough before them, and it's no business of mine.

"Look ahead, *Lobster!*" shout two young imps, themselves flagrantly on the wrong side of the river, to a boatload of Her Majesty's Guards returning from their bathing-place.

"I say, Bolter," laughs the sculler of an unwieldy tub. "M' tutor's going to complain of you; he told me so."

"What a lie!" answers a voice I know, and it belongs to Swift, minor.

"Hulloh, have you passed?" I shout.

"Passed this morning, General," he answers, and I beam at him. Passed this morning and out alone in a tub this afternoon! Poor Swift's grandson all over, a chip of the old block. May I live to see him win the sculling! Next day I see him out in a pair oar, and the day after I see a four coming towards me with a hopeless irregularity of stroke. "Here's a jolly four," cries one of two youngsters in a gig. "Well splashed, four, make a little more splash, do." As they pass me, the one rowing three is, I perceive, once more Swift, minor. His hair over his eyes, his hands halfway down his oar, his back as round as an apple, but labouring away like a man. "Keep

time, Three, *do* keep time." "I *am* keeping time," retorts Three. "No, you're not. Keep time, Three, *do*, there's old Gig-lamps looking at you," and, clippity clop, they splash on their way, and I look at my gouty toe and realize that I must indeed be nought but old Gig-lamps to them.

I *should* like to coach those energetic beginners and prevent their picking up bad tricks at their first start; but what would they believe that I knew about it? It is all different since my day, they would think, and so it is, so it is. The very buttons and blades of the oars, the size of the boats, and the sliding seats, which give speed at the expense of grace, to my thinking. But I am effete, and need not put in my opinion.

Some of the boys are my very good friends, dear fellows, and I am given to understand that I bear the reputation amongst them of being not half a bad old bird; let me not risk that by senile criticisms.

I shift my ground and go and look at "*The eight*," now in strong training.

They are improving amazingly every evening. That new stroke since my day, which proves such a jerky stumbling-block to inferior performers, is going smoothly and well. The sliding seat gives the oar a longer pull through the water, no doubt of that; so I suppose the speed must be greater. But it is a good thing to have supple young knee-joints. Lord, how it makes my creaking old bones ache to look at them!

"The Duffers row them to-night again," says some one sculling past me; "here they come."

"And who are ze Duffairs?" asks a German professor on the towing-path, of a flannel-jacketed youth standing near him with both hands in his pockets.

"The Duffers?" he answers very civilly. "Oh, the Duffers are the masters."

The Professor raises his eyebrows in amazement, then shakes his head, slightly shrugs his shoulders and mutters, "Aber, dese Englanders are ingombrehenzible." For a master with whom he has a bowing acquaintance, and knows him only in broadcloth and a black topper, has just passed him like a whirlwind, running in white flannels and a jersey, a flannel cap, and a comforter streaming as a sash from his waist, and is helping the fellows with sound advice, and experience acquired not so many years ago in a University eight.

Would that I could run as he does, I say as much to a

friendly waterman on the bank, who smiles, and in answer to my statement that it is a hundred years since I could do that kind of thing, kindly lets me down gently with the assurance that "it must 'ave been only 'alf that time, sir." It is just thirty, and I feel he *might* have allowed me a little more grace: but there—there—he is young and active, and youth is no measurer of age. Indeed, when do we become good judges of it?

At 6 we think 12 imposing—at 12 we think 18 a man—at 18 we think 26 an old chap—at 26 we think 50 decrepid—at 80 we consider 60 a boy.

Nothing shifts itself like our standard on that subject.

"Ten years ago," we say; "was it really? I had no idea it had been so long." But put it in the other way: "the year we took to clearers—the year So-and-so won the Derby" and we decide it was only yesterday.

I have heard a man talk of the youth and presumption of a man of 36—I have heard another mention 49 as a helpless old age. Well, well; give me genuine boys—genial, impulsive, honest-hearted lads like those I am amongst in the dear old place towards which my heart warms keenly.

I fully realize that whatever else is changed (some things, nay many things for the better—I will acknowledge that) the *esprit de corps* remains the same, and the manly sense of honour, and the anti-swagger unwritten code; and cordially I echo the sentiment of one who ought to know, and who, removing his straw hat, rubs his hair all round, with the remark, "a good lot, sir. Same as ever. A *good* lot, and bad to beat."

And so I fold up my spectacles and place them carefully in my pocket, and take my rod to pieces and step ashore.

And as I make my way to the station I promise myself that, the next time I feel moped or cantankerous, or growing old in earnest, I will have out that punt again for a week, and cheer myself up with a sight of the youngsters, as I can see them in easy reach of my moorings, opposite HESTER'S SHED.



Inside a Secondary Battery.

THE application of electric light to the illumination of private houses makes very slow progress. The depreciation in the value of the shares of Gas Companies, popularly known by the name of "the Electric Light scare," has become a subject of ancient history ; and electric lighting for domestic purposes remains little more than a beautiful dream, an impossible theory, not yet brought "within the range of practical politics." It must be admitted that there is a strong prejudice against electric light. The hideous "arc lamps," that flare and flicker and hiss at railway stations, and in Continental hotels, are answerable for much of the ill-feeling. Candles may be bad, oil lamps may be a nuisance, and gas an intolerable infliction, but they are luxury itself compared with these. The invention of the incandescent lamp was a gigantic stride towards perfection. The Swan light was ideally perfect in theory, but in practice difficulties arose, which have only recently been overcome. An imperfectly steady flame ; the chance of an accident to the machinery putting out the light ; the necessity, if the light were required at night, of putting on dressing-gown and slippers, descending to the cellar, and starting a gas engine ; were objections absolutely fatal to the adoption of a light, be it never so bright, so healthy, so clean, or so cheap.

But all these difficulties have been removed by the invention of *Secondary Batteries* ; electric light is at last brought "within the range of practical politics," and there is nothing to prevent any private house from being lit by its means with ease, safety, comfort, cleanliness, healthiness, and a fair amount of economy. A dynamo driven by a gas-engine is the simplest and cheapest method of replenishing the batteries ; but where absolute silence, and perfect freedom from vibration, are a *sine quâ non*, an Upward Primary Battery is quite as good, requires less skill in

the management, involves less outlay of capital, but is more expensive to work.

Electricians have, however, a great deal to learn. They have not yet succeeded in quite forgetting that electricity is a kind of gas. They are always making the mistake of the early railway-carriage builders. Exactly as these worthy men tried every thing they could to make a railway carriage look as much like a stage coach as possible, so our electrical engineers seem bent upon making the electric light imitate gas as closely as it can be made to do. They have not yet discovered that chandeliers, gasaliers, and wall brackets are hideous abominations, once necessary evils, now fit only for the lumber room or the "scrap heap."

But the influence of gas on the electrical engineer is quite as remarkable in his theory as in his practice. He is constantly in the habit of speaking of electricity in terms of gas. Whether this be due to the hereditary effect of having lived for two or three generations under the influence of gas; or whether it be a conscious concession to the supposed thick-headedness of the public, I cannot tell; but surely it is time to drop such nonsense. Is it necessary to hoodwink the confiding householder by leading him to suppose that an electric current can be wound up like a skein of silk, and stored in an accumulator as gas is stored in a gasometer? It cannot too often be insisted upon that a secondary battery is not an accumulator of electricity, nor can a galvanic current be stored in it, in any shape or form. The whole nomenclature of the subject is misleading, and entirely false as to fact. The superstitious householder naturally associates a dynamo with the terrors of dynamite, and is afraid to accumulate a store of electricity in his cellar for fear some accident should cause it to explode, like gas or steam. He lives in wholesome fear of his gas-meter, and his kitchen-boiler, and he is naturally unwilling to add a third source of anxiety to his household. But the fact is that the current of electricity produced by the dynamo is *not* stored or accumulated in the secondary battery, and is *not* even the same current of electricity which produces the light. What the current of electricity produced by the dynamo really does is this. It undoes the work (the work being certain complicated processes of chemical composition and decomposition) which made the current that gave the light. Theoretically it could be undone without the use of a dynamo and without a current of electricity of any kind. The oxide of lead might be

removed mechanically from the plates, and thrown away, to be replaced on one plate by peroxide of lead, and on the other plate by sponge lead. The sulphate of lead might also be thrown away, and an equivalent quantity of sulphuric acid might be added to the water. But these processes would involve a great waste of material, and require highly skilled labour; indeed the processes are so delicate, that it is doubtful whether any manipulator has ever acquired the skill necessary to perform them successfully. But this is exactly what the dynamo, by means of its current of electricity, does with unerring accuracy. The reasons why so costly a plant is employed to do the work is because the dynamo is a thrifty servant, who wastes no material, but reconverts it into its original form; and because it is at the same time a trustworthy servant, who always does the work equally well, does very little damage, and works with the minimum amount of dirt or smell.

The operations carried on in a secondary battery are somewhat mysterious. There is no denying the fact that John Bull is a straight-forward, out-spoken, truth-loving gentleman who hates mysteries. He is frightened at them. There can be no doubt that the mental attitude of the confiding householder towards secondary batteries is one of suspicion, not to say fear, at the present moment. This is the most potent reason why electric light in private houses "hangs fire."

Now the mystery of secondary batteries is not absolutely insoluble, though scientific men are always inventing new theories, and the explanations of the mysteries of Nature which satisfy this generation may possibly be laughed at by the next. Secondary batteries, falsely called storage batteries or accumulators, may be described as somewhat complicated contrivances to produce an electric current by means of chemical action. Electricity is no more stored in them than heat is stored in coal, or light in a tallow-candle. There is no more danger of the plates in a secondary battery exploding, than there is of the coals in the coal-cellar going off in spontaneous combustion. The heat of a coal fire is caused by the chemical combination of oxygen with hydrogen and carbon. The light of a secondary battery is caused by the chemical combination of lead with sulphur and oxygen. A gas-engine, a dynamo and a secondary battery is a triple alliance to enable this chemical process to be done and undone daily. A secondary battery is a somewhat complicated contrivance. At least five distinct chemical pro-

cesses are supposed to be carried on whilst the electric light is being used, but these processes go on silently and automatically. The first chemical process is that of the decomposition of water into its component elements, oxygen and hydrogen. The second process is that of the formation of oxide of lead by the combination of oxygen and lead. The third process is that of the reduction of peroxide of lead to oxide of lead by the removal from it of half the oxygen it contains. The fourth process is the combination of the oxygen so removed with the hydrogen produced by the first process, the result being the production of water. Finally, the fifth process is the combination of sulphuric acid and lead to form sulphate of lead. It is quite possible that other and intermediate chemical processes are carried on which have not yet been detected.

The philosophy of a secondary battery, mysterious as it seems, may however be explained in a popular manner so as to be easily understood by those who are entirely devoid of scientific knowledge, and presents many points of great interest. Reduced to its simplest form or unit, a secondary battery is a glass box, with two plates of lead in it. These plates are full of holes or pockets, those in one plate being filled with sponge lead, and those in the other with peroxide of lead. Peroxide of lead is a combination of lead and oxygen, in the proportion of two atoms of oxygen to one atom of lead. The glass box is filled with a weak solution of sulphuric acid and water, and finally the two lead plates are connected by means of a copper wire passing through the lamp, and the result is electric light.

What happens is something like this. The copper wire serves as a telephone between the two plates, who are now able to talk to each other. As might naturally be expected of such philosophical instruments as secondary batteries, the two plates begin to discourse on the inequalities in the distribution of wealth, on justice and social wrongs, in fact, as Carlyle used to say, "on this unfathomable universe in general." Both plates think whatever is, is bad: they are thoroughly dissatisfied with things as they are: they both take a pessimist view of life, and finally they embrace communistic principles. The plate with his pockets full of sponge lead, thinks himself very hardly used. My condition, says he, is perfectly ridiculous; my pockets are made of lead, and are filled full of lead. Can anything be more absurd; just as if any man with leathern pockets would be satisfied to have them filled with bits of leather? The other

plate, with his pockets full of peroxide of lead, is quite as discontented. He has carried peroxide of lead in his pockets until he hates peroxides, more than Nature abhors a vacuum, and regards the marriage of one atom of lead with two atoms of oxygen as a most disreputable transaction, in short, as neither more nor less than polygamy. But these plates are no fools, they are eminently practical individuals, possessing no ordinary amount of administrative ability. They do something more than "babble." For anything they care, "Old England may go down in babble at last," but they have made up their minds about one thing, and that is that secondary batteries shall not. The Liberal Party may waste its energies in babble, and quarrel with the Conservative Party if it likes, but the Positive Party has got to act in concert with the Negative Party, or the Plates will know the reason why. So the first thing they do is to put their heads together and swear eternal friendship, and put their shoulders to the wheel, and try and alter things, as they think, for the better. They neither of them dream of acting the part of the dog in the manger, but each tries to help the other all he can. When the social anomalies have been sifted to the bottom, and the diseases of society thoroughly diagnosed, the plates finally arrive at the conclusion that all their difficulties arise from the unequal distribution of oxygen. To remedy this disastrous, not to say immoral condition of the universe, they sign articles of partnership, and establish a factory for the decomposition of water. But neither plate has time to look after the factory, each being entirely engrossed with his own private affairs; nor if he could spare the time, has either of them the technical knowledge necessary to perform the difficult operation of separating oxygen from hydrogen. They are therefore obliged to hire a staff of overseers or paid managers to direct the business. These overseers belong to a fraternity or trade guild called the Knights of Vitriol, a very ancient society, doubtless dating back in its origin to the womb of time, though its records cannot be traced beyond the close of the 15th century, when the brethren appear in contemporary literature as Earls of Vitriol. The chief conditions of admission to this guild appear to be an accident of birth. No one is eligible unless the father belongs to the family of Brimstone, and the mother is a descendant of a certain Countess de Phlogisticus, who lived somewhere about the year 1770.

These overseers are very important personages; they appear

to do no work, beyond drawing their pay, though some scientific authorities think that they not only control the work done by the subordinates, but occasionally lend a helping hand. One thing is certain, that their presence in the factory is absolutely indispensable, and their management, on the whole, economical and efficient. To say that in all cases it was absolutely perfect would be an exaggeration ; but after having watched thirty-one secondary batteries for nine months, I have only detected any mismanagement on the part of the overseers of two of them, though I have occasionally demanded more light from them than they ought reasonably to be asked to supply.

The operations conducted in this unique establishment are as follows. Water is decomposed into its two elements, oxygen and hydrogen. The hydrogen is packed up and sent to the lead plate who has his pockets full of peroxide of lead, and who has got an idea into his head that it is extremely unjust and improper to make two atoms of oxygen combine with one atom of lead. He thinks that substantial justice would be done, and that he would be perfectly happy if he could reduce his peroxide of lead to protoxide or oxide of lead, so he is glad enough to buy the hydrogen which the factory sends him, and combine it with what he regards as his surplus stock of oxygen. The oxygen and hydrogen thus combined produce water, which replaces that decomposed in the factory. The other plate, meanwhile, goes on buying oxygen from the factory, until he has transformed the sponge lead in his pockets into oxide of lead.

The motive power employed in the factory is electricity. It is an astounding fact, of which conjecture can find no attempt at an explanation, but which is, notwithstanding, incontrovertible, that the management of this factory have what appears to us the miraculous power of summoning a current of electricity up from the vasty deep, and compelling it to work for them, but their power does not seem to be absolute. Their order must be countersigned by both the partners, that is to say by the two plates, but by acting in concert they seem to have absolute control over an endless procession of little imps, who always move in one direction, *from* the residence of the plate who has his pockets full of sponge lead, *through* the factory, where the decomposition of the water is carried on, *to* the residence of the plate who has his pockets full of peroxide of lead. As each regiment of imps passes from one residence to the other, it has

to be personally conducted by an overseer, who superintends the distribution of the oxygen or hydrogen, as the case may be. The imps carry the hydrogen with them; but the oxygen is passed back from hand to hand along the line of march, one of the overseers accompanying it, so that it may be punctually delivered to the plate. The overseers are very strict in refusing to give credit, cash on delivery is the rule of the establishment, to which no exception can be made. Each overseer, as he presents his parcel of oxygen or hydrogen, as the case may be, demands instant payment in lead, and, when he gets paid, sits down, and says that his pockets are full of money, and he declines to do any more work; and when the last has been paid, the imps, having no one to look after them, vanish, and the plates are obliged to shut up the factory. All the sulphuric acid has been abstracted from the water, and has been deposited upon the plates in the form of sulphate of lead. The two plates have succeeded in effecting a redistribution of oxygen on reciprocal principles, the pockets of each of them contain very nearly the same material, a near approach to protoxide of lead; they rejoice in having practically obtained a community of goods, they feel that justice has been done, and they are perfectly happy. But the most important fact, so far as electric lighting is concerned, has yet to be mentioned. I have already stated that in passing through the water the procession of imps require to be personally conducted by an overseer. But in the return journey, having no work to do, they do not require any superintendence, all that is necessary is to provide them with a good road, and the best road that can be found is a copper wire. They are a queer lot of little imps, with very strange idiosyncrasies. Unless the circle be complete, they stand still and refuse to move. If the road be good, they march as quiet as lambs; but if they come to a bit of bad road, they become as fierce as hyenas, get into an awful passion, and flare up tremendously. It is this habit of theirs of getting into a fiery passion when the road is bad that makes them so useful. By interposing a carbon filament, which seems to make them most angry, wherever light is wanted, this bad habit of theirs is utilised by the electrical engineer.

This process goes on every night that the electric light is used. At the end of the first night a third of the overseers have done their work, that is to say, they have superintended the delivery of the oxygen and hydrogen to the respective plates, and got

their fee. At the end of the second night two thirds are paid off; and if the process were to be continued for a third night, all the overseers would have made their fortunes and handed in their resignations, the partners would have been compelled to wind up the business, the imps would vanish, and the factory be closed.

In order to avoid this calamity the proprietor of a secondary battery is in the habit every morning of undoing the work performed by the imps on the previous night. It has already been explained that to do so mechanically is a very expensive and wasteful process, and requires a delicacy of manipulation rarely if ever to be acquired. There is only one satisfactory way of undoing the work already described, and that is by marching a procession of imps through the factory in the opposite direction to that taken by the first procession. But unfortunately the proprietor of a secondary battery is only a common man, like the writer and the reader of this article. He has no power to summon up a procession of imps from the vasty deep, as the lead plates and the sulphuric acid, if they act together, have. To obtain his electric current he is obliged to employ a dynamo, driven by a gas-engine, or some other motor of the requisite power. By the aid of this powerful machine he succeeds in raising a procession of imps from the bowels of the earth, who undo with ruthless hands the work done by the other imps during the previous evening. The oxide of lead, which one plate had so carefully and happily secured, is decomposed, its oxygen is taken from it, and handed over to the other plate, the result being that the oxide of lead on the one plate is reduced again to mere sponge lead, whilst that on the other plate is again raised to the condition of peroxide of lead. But this is not all. The overseers are robbed of their fees one by one, their purses are emptied of the lead which the plates paid them during the previous evening, and finding themselves poor and penniless, they are only too glad to go to work again to earn fresh fees, as soon as the proprietor of the battery completes the telephonic communication between the two plates, who instantly find out what has happened, re-open the factory in hot haste, and repeat the process of the previous evening, again to have it undone the following morning.

The result is the production of a light, absolutely perfect—so superior to all other kinds of light, that one might almost answer the oft-repeated question. "Is life worth living?" by replying, "Yes, provided that you have got electric light!"

HENRY SEEBOHM.

Major Lawrence, F.L.S.

BY THE HON. EMILY LAWLESS.

AUTHOR OF "HURRISH, A STUDY," ETC.

BOOK IV.—BACK AGAIN.

CHAPTER I.

OVER the proceedings of the next six years John Lawrence's chronicler may be allowed to pass with a hasty step. Within a few months of his return to India he received that staff appointment of which he had spoken to Lady Mordaunt—one of those posts beginning with the words "Deputy Adjutant," which to non-military ears all sound precisely alike. It was a good appointment, and a well-paid one, as Indian appointments for the most part are, and he remained in it for some three years, and would have remained another two but for a call to return to his regiment, in order to grapple with one of the worst onslaughts of cholera which had visited that part of India for a quarter of a century. The Colonel was away on leave; the next man in command fell ill, and John Lawrence hastily decided to resign his own appointment and return with all speed to his post in the regiment.

That he did not himself succumb to the malady it is needless to say, but when the worst was over, and the foul fiend had withdrawn, glutted, if not satiated with its tale of victims, his strength was at a point of prostration which in all his previous vigorous manhood he had never even imagined approaching. He had a touch too of jungle fever, and the two together brought him very low, so low, that the doctor insisted on complete cessation from all work as his only chance of thorough recovery. He fought against this decision as long as he could. Deep as was his dislike of India—a dislike which seemed to

increase with every year—there were many reasons that made him anxious to remain where he was for the present, and to resume his staff appointment. There came a moment, however, when the doctors became peremptory. It was go, or die, they said, and on the whole it seemed better, therefore, to go. Colonel Lawrence—he had become a brevet-Colonel, by the way, two years before—received a twelvemonth's leave, with an understanding that more would be forthcoming should it be needed, and about the middle of March set sail in a P. and O. steamer from Bombay.

His first intention had been to take passage in a troop-ship, but this virtuous resolution he at the last moment threw over, and elected to return by the costlier and more expeditious route. He had a wish—into the motives of which he did not take the trouble to dive too deeply—to return to England as he had left it, namely *viâ* Italy, and in this he had been encouraged by the doctor, who warned him against confronting the proverbial treachery of an English April.

It was the mere ghost of John Lawrence that came on board, but the voyage and his own good constitution between them performed wonders, so that by the time he disembarked at Venice he began to look upon himself in the light of an impostor, and to ask himself whether, if this state of affairs proved permanent, honesty would not require him to cancel his own leave, and return to his duties with as little delay as possible.

The six years which had passed since his return had produced changes in his position in more ways than one. If he still did not love his banishment, at least he endured it better. For one thing, he had grown to find that interest in his profession which a fairly intelligent man can hardly fail to find in any work, however little originally sympathetic, into which his best capabilities are perforce driven. For the first time, too, those capabilities had found recognition. He stood high in the regard of those under and with whom he had worked, and in whose hands advancement lay. His career in India was a widely different thing from what it had been when he had last breathed Italian air. If his health lasted, he had only to return, and, within the limits of that branch of the service to which he stood committed, there were few posts that might not, sooner or later, be open to him.

On the other hand, his home ties had suffered the fate of all

ties which are divided, not more by distance than by an utter severance of all interests and pursuits. His younger brothers he had not heard of for more than a year. They were well, he believed, and prosperous he hoped, but beyond that he knew little or nothing about them. His step-mother, and her two little girls, were settled at Brighton, to their own apparent satisfaction. His brother William, with whom he at stated periods interchanged letters, had migrated to another parish not far from a cathedral town. Lady Mordaunt, the only person with whom he kept up a steady correspondence, was settled, he knew, in her old home in Devonshire, and, in spite of those prognostications which had heralded his departure, was well, and likely to welcome him with as vigorous a kindliness as she had done eleven years earlier.

Through her he had been kept fairly *au courant* as to the proceedings of the other members of her family, though there was a tone of reserve about her letters of which he had not in earlier days been conscious. Her grand-daughter's marriage had taken place some six months after he had sailed, and she had therefore now been married a little over five years.

There were two children, a girl and a boy, about whom their great-grandmother wrote in terms of modified grandmotherly raptures. Algernon Cathers' health was occasionally alluded to, and he gathered that it was a source of some anxiety to his wife, though nothing was said that led him to suppose that there was any actual call for alarm; indeed John Lawrence had heard so much in his time about Algernon Cathers' ill-health, that the conclusion he had rather uncharitably come to was that a full half of it was imaginary, and that he was destined to outlive most of his less-talked-of contemporaries.

Lady Mordaunt's habitual frankness had not gone the length of lifting the veil which shrouded her grand-daughter's married life, so that he had been left to gather such intimations as he could by that irritating process known as reading between the lines, one which results, we all know, in alternative and often diametrically opposite impressions, according to the frame in which we happen to approach it. Throughout his journey, the idea of returning to England *via* Genoa and Marseilles, and in that case of halting at Mentone, where the Cathers were still, he knew, encamped in their winter quarters, had presented itself with much iteration to his thoughts. He could not, however, resolve upon doing so. He wished, yet shrank from it. The

idea of knocking at that particular door; being shown in; finding them together; going through the forms of cordiality; seeing himself—however temporarily—a guest under Algernon Cathers' roof! No, he said to himself, no. There were some things a man could not do, which no man ought to *ask* himself to do.

Although the first tide of love, and wrath, and impotent hatred had long since ebbed away and given place to healthier and more reasonable sentiments, there was enough soreness still to make him shrink from exposing himself to such an ordeal. To see them together would be productive of one of two things. Either he would grow reconciled, which could hardly fail to entail some loss of ideal, or he would not be at all reconciled, and the old wounds would begin to bleed afresh, the old bitterness be accentuated tenfold. If he were to see her unhappy, perhaps even unkindly treated by that—*that*—. Years, it will be observed, had not diminished the vigour of our hero's prejudices, and that significant blank,—more expressive perhaps than the most opprobrious epithets—was still what in his own thoughts he oftenest applied to Eleanor Cathers' husband. A man may be robbed of what to him represents all womankind, yet, after the first rush of rivalry, cease to detest his rival. In John Lawrence's case the elements were less simple. He would have disliked Algernon Cathers, probably, in any case, but his dislike had been increased and multiplied tenfold by suspicion. He suspected him of he knew not what, and even now, when years appeared to have disproved his suspicions, he suspected him still. If with an effort he could have got over this dislike he would perhaps have done so, but he knew himself better than to suppose it possible, and therefore made no such futile attempt. It was with these alternate impulses plucking with little diminished energy at his heart, that he arrived one gusty April night at Genoa, leaving the further direction of his journey still undetermined.

His train was late, and the transit to the hotel was accomplished in a huge rattling omnibus which smelt of boots, and none of the windows of which could be induced to open. He was the only passenger, the big unwieldy thing rocking its way between walls which rose like beetling crags upon either side of the narrow street. The hotel too, when attained, proved of size proportionate to the vehicle belonging to it. And when, having swallowed a hasty meal, he was conducted to a

gusty cavern of a bed-room, and left there to the light of a single candle, half extinguished by the gusts which swept through door and window, he retired to bed in a frame of mind distinctly the reverse of amiable.

Next morning, however, brought relief. His sepulchral bed-room proved to be provided with a balcony, upon which, on the strength of his invalidship, he allowed himself to breakfast. The sun shone; the air was warm, yet tingling; below him the sweep of the harbour extended itself in all its magnificent amplitude, the new pier stretching out a friendly arm to meet its older and less imposing brother. Our Colonel felt a sudden desire to inspect all this at closer quarters, so sallied out prepared for enjoyment, and determined to find it.

As his biographer has before remarked, he was not artistically gifted, and things had need to be very picturesque in order to impress themselves upon his mind as such. Genoa, however, upon this occasion performed the feat—perhaps because he was in the mood to allow it to do so. He told himself that he liked it better than Venice, a sentiment which, I fear, displays the depth of his æsthetic depravity. The fact was that his long-continued spell of weakness and depression had suddenly taken an upward turn, and Genoa reaped the credit. Convalescence is a period either of great depression or of great exuberance, and having long been the former, it had now become the turn of the latter. He felt well, or upon the high road to be well; he felt, too, that blissful premonition of happiness which comes to us sometimes by the merciful favour of heaven without a grain of anything in our circumstances to call it forth. He revelled in the sense of being once again on European soil, and he looked towards the line of Rivieran headlands melting one behind the other, with a tenderness which for the moment carried no bitterness with it.

Tired at last of the clatter and jostle, he lounged up the broad steps of the Terraso di Marmo, and sat down on a stone bench in one of the small recesses that break the long line of its marble balustrade. It was very still and hot, too hot by half for any one not already seasoned to a yet fiercer radiance. The broad white expanse wore an odd resemblance to a sheet of ice, starred by small cracks, and glittering under a sunshine which awakened queer distorted reflections like sudden impish smiles at the corners. Upon the whole expanse not a creature was to be seen except a slovenly girl, with a red-and-green plaid shawl

over her black head, who was sauntering along with a listless slip-shod step, munching cherries as she went, and throwing their stalks away over the marble parapet. Between the pillars of the balustrade he could see into the arcades below, in one of which some men were beating and twisting bars of red-hot iron, the red glow of the forge behind giving them no little resemblance to some of those painstaking demons we see in certain of the great damnatory canvases. The Colonel did not think of this, but it struck him they must be deuced hot down there.

When he looked back the Terraso was no longer deserted. The woman with the plaid shawl had departed, but four other figures had taken her place, and were advancing slowly towards him over its smooth expanse. These consisted of a tall lady, carrying a large white sunshade and leading a little girl by the hand; a stout personage, evidently a nurse, who, when John Lawrence first perceived the party, carried a child in her arms, which being set down upon its feet, had begun to toddle with fat uncertain legs over the pavement, its diminutive shadow waving an uncertain and wobbling accompaniment upon the gleaming surface.

The lady with the sunshade advanced directly towards him; the little girl—a tiny elfin-like creature, with a mass of fair hair set on end like an electrical doll—running beside her. Both were looking out over the harbour as if amongst that inextricable mass of boats, sails, and spars, seeking to distinguish some one sail or spar in particular. When nearly on a line with him, she glanced carelessly towards him, and was in the act of passing on, but seemed suddenly arrested as if struck by some singularly vivid resemblance, the next minute averting her gaze as if aware of having made a mistake. She had not gone half-a-dozen steps, however, before she again paused, and looked back with an air of uncertainty. The Colonel on his side, had risen and was looking after her with a vague stupefaction, a growing bewilderment, through which faint thrills of memory were beginning to throb and burn. This time the lady no longer hesitated. She turned round, letting the child's hand go as she did so, and advanced towards him, with the liberated hand extended.

"Surely you will not tell me that I am mistaken! Surely you *are* Major Lawrence?" she said.

"Lady Eleanor!" It all rushed over him like a flood, without warning, without a single moment's breathing time. Now that

she had spoken, recognition followed as a clap follows a flash. Even now, however, he could hardly blame his own amazing stupidity, so greatly had she altered. She was always tall, but even her height seemed to have changed its character, the six years that had intervened having robbed it of all that youthful angularity, which had made it a defect rather than an embellishment. Her face, too, had greatly changed, and changed, there was no question, immeasurably for the better. There had been far less difference between the child of twelve and the girl of seventeen, than there was between the girl of seventeen and the woman of twenty-three. She was a beautiful woman now, strikingly, unquestionably beautiful, far more so than she had promised to be. And yet—so strangely are men made—the first effect of his recognition of this realization was a sudden sense of intense disappointment, followed almost instantly by one of relief. He had dreaded this meeting, dreaded it more even than he had avowed to himself, but now he suddenly perceived that he dreaded it no longer. Elly Mordaunt,—the child, the girl whom he had loved and lost—was gone, vanished! It was as though she had never existed. This beautiful, stately, benign-looking young woman who stood before him was not his Elly at all. She was Lady Eleanor Cathers, quite a different person, another man's wife, and the mother of these children; no more perilous to his peace of mind, he told himself, than yonder mosaic Madonna up on that palace wall, and in the exhilaration produced by this sudden realization he was able to respond to her greeting with a warmth and appropriateness which he would otherwise have found impossible.

She, however, was the first to speak.

"This is wonderful!" she exclaimed. "I cannot help feeling that I am speaking to a ghost! When did you leave India? It was only the other day that my grandmother wrote to say that she had heard from you, and that you had been ill, but not a word about your coming home!"

"No, it was a sudden thought. I seemed to be getting worse, so was packed off without being allowed an opinion on the subject. Now I find that, as I suspected, it was all a mistake, and that I am here under false pretences. In fact I think I am bound in honour to return!"

"I wouldn't do that. I don't think you look at all too well!"

"Well, I am not starting immediately, at any rate! And you, Lady Eleanor? I can hardly believe in my own good

fortune! That within two days of my landing in Europe, I should meet you face to face! If it is strange to you to see me, think what it is to me to see you!"

"Oh, but my being here is not really so strange," she answered in her old, serious, eager tones. "We are often in Genoa. It is not far, you know, from Mentone, and my husband likes moving about. He gets tired, naturally, of the long dull winter always in the same place. I have left him now at the hotel, and came with the children to look for the yacht. It was to have come in last night from Mentone. Jan, darling, come here and speak to this gentleman. Do you know this is a very, very old friend of mother's, who knew her when she was very little older and not much wiser than you are?"

Jan, whose big eyes looked up with an air of preoccupation from under her cloud of hair, was a wee child with a small old-fashioned face, too pale to be pretty, but with an air of preternatural wisdom which belied her mother's words.

"How do you do?" she said in a small, distinct voice, with the due emphasis upon every separate syllable. "Please, where ith the 'Veda?'" pointing a small finger anxiously towards the harbour.

"Jan's one thought day and night is the 'Veda,'" her mother said, smiling. "I say we keep it for her benefit, for my husband is so seldom able to go sailing. No, Jan dear, this gentleman does not know where the 'Veda' is, and we must wait till we get back to find out where she was to anchor."

"How old is she?" the Colonel enquired with a smile.

"A little past four. She is a mite, is she not, even for that age?"

"She looks very big to me when I remember that she is your daughter," he answered.

"Ah, yes! It makes one feel very old, doesn't it?" she said lightly; after which there was a moment's pause.

"You will come back with us to the hotel?" she added entreatingly. "You cannot imagine what a happiness it is seeing you again! Do you know I was feeling this morning as if something pleasant was going to happen? One doesn't often have that feeling, once one has left off being a child, does one? but to-day, oddly enough, I had."

"I had just the same," he answered, smiling.

They went down the broad steps, little Jan still turning wistful eyes towards the sea, and pulling at her mother's hand

to make her go slower. An open carriage was waiting at the foot of the steps, into which they all got; the children first, then the nurse, then Lady Eleanor and the Colonel. It seemed to him the strangest piece of unreality to see her settling them upon the seat opposite, ascertaining with all a mother's solicitude that the wraps were properly tucked round little knees, and the parasols tilted at exactly the right angle to hinder the sun from striking upon small eyes blinking up at the daylight. Was it, could it be Elly Mordaunt? his own wild, untamed, untamable Elly? he asked himself; she who as it seemed only yesterday was a child herself? Or was he indulging in the strangest, the most extravagant of day-dreams? Surely, surely the latter!

CHAPTER II.

The hotel to which they were driven was at some distance from his own, and was situated in one of the larger squares. The Cathers' rooms—a much-decorated suite, with enormously heavy gilt furniture—were upon the first floor, and were approached by a staircase hung with pictures, more gorgeous, perhaps, than valuable. Young Mr. Cathers was lying upon a sofa near the open window, but sprang up immediately upon their entrance, and shook hands cordially with his wife's companion. He had not changed much, the Colonel thought; his complexion was more waxen, and he was thinner than he had been, otherwise there was not much difference. He was nearly as handsome, and as soon appeared not a whit less conversational than of old.

There was a great clatter of buying and selling going on under the windows, the greater part of the piazza being littered with cabbage-stalks and other odds and ends of greenery, with men and women, too, engaged in pulling down and packing up numerous booths and movable counters. It seemed to offer a natural topic of conversation, and John Lawrence made some remark about it. Algernon Cathers at once took up the lead:

"Insufferable, is it not?" he exclaimed, seating himself again upon his sofa with an air of dramatic despair. "Italy is the noisiest country in the world, and Genoa the noisiest town in Italy, and this hotel the noisiest in all Genoa! We have changed our rooms three times since we arrived here, but always for the

worse. When we first came our bedrooms looked to this side, and the roaring and rattling continued till long past midnight, and began again with the first ray of daylight. Then—thinking that nothing could well be worse—I made them move us to the back, but if I did I found that a *vicolo*, as I believe they call the thing, runs exactly there, and up and down it the people pour, stopping now and then to cluster under the window in knots to discuss the welfare of Italy, added to which the infernal thing is paved with stones or bricks, which stick out in ribs all the way down, so that every truck and barrow that passes seems to be going jog, jog, jog, over your unfortunate vertebral column. Then, thinking that we must at last have attained the uttermost depths of pandemonium, I made them change us once again, but I find that there are huge iron cages full of cocks and hens fastened on to the outside of the house opposite—about two feet away—and the cackling and crowing of those miserable fowls is enough to cause the very dead to rise up out of their graves to swear. I wanted to practise at them with a saloon pistol, but Lady Eleanor wouldn't hear of it, and the hotel manager wrings his hands and declares that he can do nothing, as they don't belong to him, so there is nothing to do but put up with it as long as we stay, and oscillate from one room to the next, according as the noise becomes more endurable upon one side or the other. At present it seems to be worst here, so I vote we move to the other sitting-room."

"It will be better soon; the market seems nearly over, Algernon," said his wife.

"Better! But for how long? You people without nerves don't know your own good fortune! I believe you'd as soon have the cocks and hens as not! Meanwhile it must be luncheon time. You'll stay luncheon, Major, of course?"

But the Colonel hastily excused himself, declaring that he never ate luncheon.

"Not even if you call it tiffin? I thought all Indians ate tiffin. Anyhow, don't go, or we shall lose sight of you for ever. What were you going to do this afternoon? Can't we combine and go somewhere together? For Heaven's sake, don't desert us! Remember we are stranded mariners, and that you are a friendly sail that has just hoven in sight!"

"I was thinking of going to the Campo Santo. That seems to be one of the sights," John answered.

"The Campo Santo! That's a lively place for a man to go

to! The doctors tell me I shall take up my residence there soon for good and all, if I don't mind, so I think I'd better keep out of it as long as I can."

"Oh, yes, don't let us go to the Campo Santo!" Lady Eleanor said hastily.

"After all, though, I don't see why not," her husband rejoined. "It's one of the regular Genoese sights, as Lawrence says, and having been here some twenty times, it seems rather a disgrace never to have seen it. Who's afraid? I'm not. If you and the Major—— Not Major? What then? Oh, of course Colonel, thousand apologies! If you and the Colonel will take your chances, I am game to do so. You can take that portentously serious little daughter of yours too, if you like. Such a piece of solemnity will be quite in her place amongst the tombstones!"

The Colonel looked apologetically at Lady Eleanor. He was sorry he had mentioned the place, as it was evident that she had a dislike to going there. She made no further objection however.

"What o'clock shall we order the carriage?" she enquired of her husband.

"Any hour Lawrence likes. He is the visitor, the passer-by. Happy man, I only wish I was! We are the logs, which stick in a backwater while all the rest go floating by."

The carriage was standing before the door of the hotel when, an hour later, John Lawrence returned, and they were speedily driving between the unattractive-looking houses which congregate about the Porto Romano, and through that aperture into the sudden view of fort-crowned hills which surround the town. The horses were so good, the carriage rattled over the indifferently paved road at such a remarkable pace, that he could not forbear remarking upon it. The mystery became less surprising, however, when it was explained that carriage and horses were the Cathers' own; they had brought them with them from Mentone. "It saves a world of bother," their owner explained.

Getting down at the entrance to the cemetery their passage was impeded for a moment by a stout gentleman with a broad red neck and large white necktie, who, upon turning round, was greeted by the Cathers as Mr. Nokes. From the conversation that ensued it appeared that this gentleman was also a winter inhabitant of Mentone, where he had left his family, to come away for a few days' relaxation; indeed, the Colonel, to

whom he was introduced, thought that he vaguely recollected his face as that of one of the *habitués* of Lady Mordaunt's salon.

Lady Eleanor, who seemed anxious to keep by her husband's side, led the way with him into the open part of the cemetery, the other two gentlemen following, little Jan running on ahead, and pausing every now and then, like a small pointer, to stare solemnly at some object which caught her attention, looking back as she did so at her mother, to make her examine it too.

"Your first visit to these parts, Colonel Lawrence?" Mr. Nokes enquired hospitably. There was something genial about his rubicund, singularly ugly face, close-shaven like a Roman priest's, but in which the fatherly element seemed to predominate over the sacerdotal.

The Colonel explained that he had passed through Genoa before, but that circumstances had then obliged him to hurry, so that he knew little or nothing of its attractions.

"Ah—interesting town, very! Now this place"—glancing comprehensively at the long grey corridors and central space bedotted with tombstones—"this place, I suppose, has certainly no equal in the world. The mere amount of money which people expend upon these mementoes is something phenomenal—particularly if you take their poverty into consideration. Regrettable you say? Well yes, regrettable, if you look at it in one way, but still interesting, decidedly interesting. It makes them reflect too, no doubt, and must have a good effect in that respect. By the way, I was not a little surprised, do you know, to meet Mr. Cathers here," he added, dropping his voice to a significant whisper, and glancing at his companion as he did so.

Colonel Lawrence looked at him enquiringly.

"Mr. Cathers? Yes. I was surprised, I say, to see him here. He has always seemed to me to shrink from anything that recalled—anything suggestive of death, you know; to be decidedly morbid and nervous upon the subject. Sad, but not perhaps so very unnatural. Not having any regular spiritual duty at Mentone, I have hesitated to touch upon the subject with him; in fact, should hardly have felt myself justified in doing so, but that has always been my impression. You are aware, I suppose, that the doctors have a very bad opinion of him, are you not?" he added abruptly, sinking his voice to a complete whisper, and glancing cautiously ahead, so as to make sure that the other three were out of earshot.

"I was not indeed. I know that his chest has always been delicate, and that he is obliged to winter abroad, but not that there was anything seriously amiss."

Mr. Nokes shook his head slowly from side to side, compressing his large loose lips as he did so.

"It is so, I assure you. His lungs are——" he tapped his own broad chest, and shook his head again with an air of concern. "If he is alive this time next year it will be a miracle; nothing short of a miracle," he said impressively. "Dr. Duckett all but admitted as much to me."

"Good God! you don't say so?" John Lawrence exclaimed.

He looked up suddenly at the husband and wife walking side by side some twenty yards ahead of them. Algernon Cathers was laughing and pointing to something with his stick, she smiling in response. It was not in itself an enlivening scene! Hundreds of more or less grim little symbols of death were sprouting like mushrooms out of the grass, every little column or squat cross bearing its burden of dusty immortelles, or more deplorable withered flowers; each with a black lantern dangling like a felon's effigy from a peg in the ground beside it. Not a cheerful scene as to its details, and yet, taken as a whole, flooded as it was with sunshine, with here and there a bright patch of colour; with the violet hills behind crowned with forts; with the sea catching the eye through a sudden dip in the ground, it looked bright and smiling enough, a piteous commentary, somehow, in its brightness upon this sentence which he had just heard pronounced. Like most self-contained men, John Lawrence had great capabilities of hatred, and he had hated this man as he had certainly never hated any one else in his whole life. For all that, as he looked at him now, a great wave of pity seemed to rise and sweep over him; to engulf and almost to extinguish his hatred. In a year! To leave wife, children, fortune—everything that could make life happy—and to go out into the cold; into the void; naked; alone! A man so luxurious, too; so spoilt; who had never in all his life had to do anything he disliked. The horror of the thing struck home to him vividly, and he shuddered with a sudden rush of pity.

"Does his—do you suppose Lady Eleanor knows?" he enquired hoarsely.

"I fancy so. At least I have always seemed to read the secret of her extraordinary patience in some such knowledge," Mr. Nokes replied.

The Colonel's pity, which was flowing in a warm flood, seemed suddenly to congeal as if smitten with frost. "You mean that he—doesn't—doesn't treat her well?" he enquired, dropping his voice to an even lower key than they had hitherto spoken in. "Excuse the question," he added abruptly. "I dare say it seems to you that I have no right to put it, but I am a very old friend, and I only returned two days ago from India, so you may imagine I am naturally anxious to know anything that affects her—their interests."

Mr. Nokes' cheerful rubicund face assumed an air of responsibility. "I really—I am no authority," he said, rather shortly. "As I said, my acquaintanceship has been a matter purely of externals. I have no pretension to call myself a friend. What I know is obvious to every one. He is an invalid who will not be treated like an invalid, and yet that abuses the privileges of invalidship. To keep him in humour must be a very serious task. Lady Eleanor is entitled to every one's sympathy."

The Colonel longed to ask more. It seemed an opportunity which might not recur of getting to know the facts about Algernon Cathers as they were known to the outer world. Yet what right or authority, after all, had he to ask? He was still inwardly debating the matter when they were summoned by a call from the party in front, who had stopped before a monument placed near the entrance of one of the galleries. This monument represented a stout Genoese citizen ascending up to heaven, arrayed in his dress-clothes, complete down to the boot-buttons, and supported on either side by a pair of dumpy cherubs, their cheeks ornamented with tears of the dimensions of hazel-nuts. The defunct gentleman was being waited for on high by an expectant galaxy of saints, while below his despairing family stood about in attitudes expressive of distinguished woe, their tasselled boots and other adornments conscientiously rendered. The adoring wife, while straining her eyes after her ascending lord, being careful to lift her upper skirts an inch or two, so that the sculptor might not fail to impress upon the spectators his perfect ability to grapple with the difficulties presented by a third and even a fourth layer of embroidery which ornamented the flounces of her petticoat.

"There you behold the quintessence of modern Italian art!" Algernon Cathers was saying as they came up. "Look at their hooks-and-eyes! look at their eyelet-holes and tassels and

bobbins! look at their brooches and gloves, and eyelashes and hairpins! Can't you imagine with what pride the survivors must come here upon a Sunday afternoon, and count the buttons upon their own boots, and point out to their friends exactly the attitudes they took upon the interesting occasion! Eleanor, my dear, this is *not*, by the way, the style of monument which I wish you to erect in my honour," he continued, turning with mock solemnity to his wife. "Mr. Nokes, I take you to witness!"

In the light of the information he had just received, that piece of pleasantry sounded ghastly in John Lawrence's ears, more ghastly if anything than the sepulchral ornamentations of the place, and he moved a step aside to examine a bust which stood upon a pedestal hard by.

Algernon Cathers, too, seemed to have had about enough of the Campo Santo. His glance, which had been smilingly roving from group to group, was suddenly arrested by a skull grinning with hollow cavernous jaws above a pair of cross-bones, and he gave a quick involuntary shiver. "Come, it is late," he said abruptly; "Miss Jan ought to be getting home to her tea. Ugh! what an ugly place it is, to be sure! Thank Heaven, we've done it once and for all!"

He lingered again, however, a little further on, fascinated as most visitors are by the grisly humours of the scene. Lady Eleanor walked ahead, holding her little girl by the hand, and John Lawrence availed himself of the opportunity to say a few words to her apart.

"I am afraid you don't thank me for having suggested this expedition," he said apologetically.

"Oh, don't think that. It is one of the regular sights, and we should have had to come sooner or later. Only all this panoply of woe, this deliberate elaboration of broken-heartedness seems to me to make death and sorrow so much uglier and more painful. It is as if the people were grimacing and posturing for one's admiration—like those skeletons decked in fine clothes one sees in some of the frescoes! Still, as we should have had to come and see it some day, it is as well, as Algernon says, to get it over. You are not leaving Genoa just yet, I hope?" she added, with rather a hasty change of subject.

"I am not sure," he answered doubtfully. "Do you expect to remain much longer?"

"A week, perhaps more, I cannot tell. We are forbidden to return to England before the end of May, and it is very difficult to fill the time up satisfactorily. Algernon likes staying within reach of this yacht, though we are able to make so little use of it. We lunch on board occasionally, or take little cruises when it is very calm."

"You used not to mind rough weather."

"No ; but Algernon is forbidden to go out when there is any wind, there is always a danger of it irritating his lungs. Probably when we leave here we shall go to Spezia. One can sail about the bay there almost any day, and it is warmer than here. This Genoa climate is the most treacherous thing possible. Just now it is warm enough, but any moment the winds may become piercing."

"Spezia is rather a nice place, is it not ?" the Colonel said tentatively.

"Yes, at least it used to be. You don't know it ? Come and make acquaintance with it. Unless, that is, you have any urgent business to do in England. Very likely you have ?"

"No, indeed !" he answered eagerly. "Never was a man more devoid of any semblance of a reason for hurrying there. None of my relations expect me, or know that I have left India. Even if they did, I can't flatter myself that my presence would make any great difference to them. Indeed, were I to go to England to-morrow, I believe my first impulse would be to present myself at Mordaunt."

"Really. Then do let us have the benefit of it. I know grandmamma would spare you if she knew, and you can form no idea of what a boon your company would be to us. It is very selfish though, I know, to urge it," she went on penitently. "As Algernon says, we clutch at any friendly hand that comes in our way as if we were literally drowning. And to have *you* at hand would be—I really cannot tell you what it would be !"

The others were still a little behind, having stopped again to read an inscription. John Lawrence hesitated. Her last words had touched him deeply. Although his six years' heartache was, he believed, cured, she was still and always must be the shrine in which the love of his life lay buried. To be of use to her, he would have compassed sea and land, and have sacrificed his own comfort without a word or a second thought. There was another side to the question, however. His old dislike of Algernon Cathers was still, he knew, alive, or had been up to

a very recent date. Could he, even at this late hour, trust himself in his company, seeing him daily, perhaps hourly, without showing that dislike, which now would be unseemly, nay, brutal to the last degree. Had this piece of information which he had just heard and the rush of pity it had evoked effaced that dislike, or was it still there, and liable to reappear at any moment? If so, was he not bound in honour to keep away?

Lady Eleanor looked a little surprised at his hesitation. "I see what it is," she said. "You are trying to arrange matters so as to come with us, though there is somewhere else you want to go, and it is inconvenient to you to do so. Don't, please, think of it. I spoke thoughtlessly. We are quite used to being stranded here when every one else is rushing home. It would be most unfair to insist upon detaining you after you have been so long away. You must want to get back to England, whether you have business to do there or not."

"I have nothing to do really," he answered earnestly. "And if I had I should far rather stay. It was not that that made me hesitate. The fact is I—I cannot quite decide immediately. If when you leave this I find that I can go where you are going, I will. If not, you will believe that it is not because other affairs, even if I had any, could count against your wishes. You believe that, don't you?"

"Yes, I believe it; I am sure you will come if you can," she answered. "I don't think I have ever disbelieved you, have I?" she added with a smile which woke the old Elly for an instant to his eyes. "You never gave me any cause, at any rate," she added more gravely.

CHAPTER III.

A couple of mornings later he met her walking briskly along alone; her height, which lifted her several degrees above the general level of an Italian crowd, her fairness, and stately youthful beauty making her a sufficiently striking apparition to come upon in the crowded intricacies of a Genoese street. A dozen black moustaches and a couple of dozen eyes, ranging in social elevation from those of the umbrella-mender at the corner to those of an officer of carbineers, with cloak slung slantwise over his shoulder, were all concentrated in her direction, with

that undisguised admiration which is Italy's tribute to beauty. That she was unconscious herself of that tribute, was evident, but the Colonel, as he joined her, was not equally unconscious, and he glared right and left with a sense of proprietary indignation, for which he would have found it rather difficult to find a justification.

"I am shopping," she said, when they had shaken hands. "I am on my way to a carpet shop. We do most of the furnishing of our villa here, or rather try to do so. Will you come with me? If you are sight-seeing the carpet shop is worth a visit, as you will see."

They passed down a narrow street into the square of Bitter Fountains and through it into the newly named Via Garibaldi, passing between heavily-barred windows, each as wide nearly as the frontage of a moderate-sized house; past staircases, guarded here by a pair of gigantic lions, growling at vacancy, there by a colossus brandishing his club in the middle of a lonely court-yard. The crowd poured along; tramcars trotted briskly over the pavement, driving foot-passengers against the walls; overhead the grandest rows of houses probably ever raised by human hands lifted their colossal roofs above the turmoil.

Lady Eleanor turned into the entrance of one of these; through a great vaulted hall and in by an incongruously modern glass door, which swung to with such rapidity that it was as much as the Colonel could do to catch and hold it for her. Inside, the old and the new Italy seemed to meet and confront one another. It was a vast echoing hall, populous, no doubt, with memories, had any one been there to supply a key; with windows set so high in the wall, that the sun might beat for ever without reaching the floor, and through which the turmoil they had left without came in faint and muffled reverberations, as to some deep-lying ocean cavern. The floor of the cavern was strewn, not with the bones of drowned men, but with bales upon bales of carpet, gorgeous to look upon, afflictive for the most part to the æsthetic eye. They abounded in orange and green; in mauve and red; above all in magenta and that crude purpureal blue beloved by the Italy of to-day. Bunches of impossible roses and lilies, tied with still more impossible bows of ribbon, were there in truly appalling contrast; English manufactures for the most part, but English manufactures whose market has of late happily waned at home,

but which appear to have fallen in a variegated cataract upon the devoted peninsula, to the delight of its natives and the unspeakable woe of its visitors. Tier above tier they ranged, and between them hung rugs and door-mats of the same gorgeously afflictive type, a magnificent Bengal tiger stretched at full length under a bottle-green palm-tree depending from the ceiling, upon which a Triumph of Venus—the work evidently of no mean hand—might still be faintly seen amongst cobwebs in the dim light reflected off a neighbouring white-washed wall.

Colonel Lawrence seated himself upon a roll of carpet, and looked at the ceiling, while Lady Eleanor proceeded to explain her requirements to one of the officials of the establishment, who hurried out of an inside office to receive her orders. Presently she was carried off to inspect something in another room, and he was left sitting there on his bale of carpet under the supervision of a pair of clerks with beautiful pointed moustaches, whom, had he met elsewhere, he would probably have taken for a couple of youthful attachés. She came back after a while with an air of rather unsuccessful effort; thanked the official, who attended her with obsequious bows to the entrance, and they passed out again through the glass doorway into the street.

"It is so difficult to get what one wants," she said, in a tone of vexation. "Algernon has such a wonderfully correct eye, that it is a misery to him to have to sit in any room where the furniture is not exactly what he wishes it to be. It was only the simplest thing I wanted—merely some quite common felt or matting of a good plain neutral tint. I see though that we shall not be able to get it here, and I must write therefore to Paris; the things that good man showed me with such pride would simply have given Algernon a fit! I used to think when I was a girl," she went on with a smile, "that anything was to be had if you liked to pay for it, but since I have been married I have learnt that that is a great mistake."

"Most things, I should have thought, if you went to the right places for them."

"Oh, no, indeed, not even then! Not when you have a high standard: I have hardly any standard myself, so I am not a case in point; so long as things are not too obtrusively glaring or out of harmony I am satisfied. But Algernon has trained his eye to such a point of exactitude that nothing short of perfection satisfies him, and perfection is not to be attained, I assure you,

by writing cheques. You must go yourself; you must be content to take any amount of pains; to be as careful, in short," she added, with a smile, "as if your carpet and curtains were so many suitors for the hand of your daughter."

"Isn't it rather a mistake wearing out your life over that sort of thing? After all, the pleasure to be extracted out of carpets and curtains, let them be what they may, doesn't amount to much, does it?"

"Perhaps not, but don't let any one hear you say so. They would simply set you down once for all as a Philistine—a being to be avoided. To tell the honest truth," she went on, "my own theory is that a little bit of Philistinism in one's composition is rather a comfort than otherwise. Your life runs smoother, and you are less perpetually jarred and shocked by an unavoidable contact with ugliness. But that is a heresy, not to be breathed except into very discreet ears."

"I can understand *ladies* spending their time over such things," the Colonel said in his gruffest, most John-Bull-like tones; "but not men; men have generally other things to do."

"Yes, but then you have admitted you are a Philistine, have you not? Besides, supposing you had not many other things to do, and supposing you were delicate, and had no profession, and a good deal of money to get through; supposing, too, you were born with a very artistic temperament, can't you imagine yourself growing hypercritical about such matters, insisting that you would have nothing short of perfection? Of course the Nemesis of taste, when it is cultivated up to a really high pitch, is that it never *can* be really satisfied. It always remains hopelessly behind its own ideal."

The Colonel did not answer. The allusion to her husband's health had sent his thoughts back to the conversation he had had two days before with Mr. Nokes at the Campo Santo. He was rather startled, therefore, when she presently added:

"How do you think him looking?"

"Your husband? He is paler than he used to be, and—*and* thinner," he said hesitatingly. "Otherwise I don't see any great difference—at least, not much."

She shook her head.

"You are not speaking with your usual candour. Don't be afraid of alarming me. I know how much need of care there is better than any one." She paused a minute or two, and then went on with a sort of passion. "The great difficulty—the

almost hopeless difficulty—is to find any occupation that can really interest him—that any one in his state of health can pursue. You have no idea how hard it is until you try. Of course a clever active-minded man like Algernon wearies of all these places; of the idleness; the want of any definite occupation, even of any definite amusement. He is tired of Mentone, tired of the Riviera, tired of this place, tired of Spezia, tired of Florence, yet he is absolutely forbidden to return to England before the beginning of June. Every day I dread his proposing to do so. We went last year, and the result was he got a chill which he has never entirely got over.” She paused, and then went on again in a tone of beseeching urgency. “If you could help me in this, if you could support me and persuade him—without, of course, showing I had asked you do so—to be prudent, to refrain from running risks. You don’t know what it would be. That is what I want more than anything,—a friend, some one who is not a woman, nor yet a doctor. I know how unreasonable it is of me to ask it of you, but if you only *knew* the misery of having no one to consult, no one to share my responsibility. Will you?—for as long as you are with us—will you help me?”

“I will try; I will do my best,” John Lawrence answered curtly. So *this* was what he had come back from India for, was it? This was his unseen destiny, the work he was sent to do! he said to himself. Well, if it was to be, it was, and he would do what he could. She should not have it to say that she had asked him in vain!

They went into the hotel. As they were going upstairs a small voice was heard above, speaking with that shrill childish distinctness which always gives the hearer a peculiar sensation; a thin, vernal shrillness like the first piping notes of a very young bird.

“But Muddie thaid I might!”—then followed something indistinct in another voice, and then——“But Muddie thaid I might, and Muddie knowths.”

A small pattering of feet, and little Jan appeared; first a pair of scarlet-stockinged legs; then her little elf-like face, with its crown of straw-coloured hair. After her, in full pursuit, followed a large, handsome woman, with black heavily arched eyes, and a coarse but brilliant brunette complexion. Jan, however, had caught sight of her mother, and rushed down the next flight of stairs to her, clasping her tightly round the knees.

"What is it my darling?" Lady Eleanor said. "I hope you have not been naughty, Jan?"

"No, not naughty. Maddymoiselle thays that I mustn't go to Muddie—not all day—but I may, mayn't I, Muddie?"

Lady Eleanor glanced for an explanation toward the woman who had now reached the same level.

"I understood that Miladi desired *la petite* should remain upstairs until she was sent for," she answered volubly in French. Her manner was perfectly respectful, but there was something unpleasant, the Colonel thought, about the expression of her eyes.

"Did I? I don't think I did. She always comes to me at this hour," Lady Eleanor said in a tone of some surprise. "Go up, Jan dear, and finish your lessons very well, and then Mademoiselle I am sure will let you come down."

"What a good-looking woman!" the Colonel said, when they had gone on into the sitting-room, which proved to be empty. "She is Italian, is she not?"

"No. French, or rather Provençal. She lives at Mentone, and has been coming to us every day this winter to teach Jan, and when we left to come here, she asked to accompany us."

"Have you known her long?"

Not very. Some friends of Algernon's had her as nursery governess for their children. She is a very good teacher. Unfortunately, Jan has taken rather a dislike to her, though she never will tell me why. And to tell the truth," she added, with a smile, "I rather share the feeling, though I too cannot tell you why. I always have a ridiculous wish to beg her not to look at me."

"Why do you keep her, if you dislike her?" John Lawrence asked with some surprise.

"Well, it doesn't seem a sufficient reason for parting with her, does it? Algernon too likes her and thinks she keeps Jan in order. I am afraid I am rather susceptible to likes and dislikes. When I was a child, you may remember, I was always devoted to, or detested every one I came near, and I have not got over the tendency even yet. Mlle. Riaz is a capital teacher, there can be no question of that."

"Nevertheless I wouldn't have any one in the house whom I disliked," he answered. "You may be sure it is a mistake. The more so, as that sort of feeling is almost invariably returned."

"Do you really think so?" she said, in rather a startled tone.

"I am sure of it. And if the dislike is strong from above, think how much stronger it is likely to be from below—in the person, I mean, who has to receive orders, than in the person who gives them. Besides one never really keeps a feeling like that concealed, however hard one may try."

"It has sometimes struck me Mlle. Riaz did not like me," Lady Eleanor said, thoughtfully. "At least, she seems to like to cross my will about trifles—only, of course, about trifles. Her manner is always perfectly respectful. I was once very angry—unreasonably angry—with her about something, and I have felt mentally in an apologetic attitude toward her ever since."

"Then, if I were you I would find an opportunity of getting unreasonably angry again, and of giving Mlle. Riaz her *congé*," he said with a laugh.

"Don't say that. Nothing humiliates one like losing one's temper. I watch over mine as if it were a case full of diamonds. I would rather lose everything else I possess. People who have good tempers are enviable beyond words. Mine is very bad, and I don't believe it improves either, though I don't suppose I show it as much as I did when I was a child."

"Judging by looks your Mlle. Riaz has a temper too, a worse than yours I suspect! Anyhow I wouldn't keep her if I were you. I don't think a feeling of that sort comes for nothing."

"Perhaps not, and yet it doesn't seem fair that another person should be the sufferer by one's own fancies. Added to which I don't think Algernon would let me take any sudden step of the kind, not at least without a better reason."

The door opened while she was still speaking and her husband came in.

"What wouldn't that domestic tyrant Algernon let you do?" he enquired with a smile and a nod of greeting to the visitor. He had a great bunch of orchids in his hands which he was smelling at luxuriously as he advanced.

His wife coloured a little. "We were only talking of Mlle. Riaz," she said. "I was saying that she is an excellent teacher, and that I wished I liked her better. It is so stupid to take dislikes for no particular reason."

Her husband was still smelling his orchids, but glanced over them at her with rather an odd expression. His voice, however, when he answered was carelessness itself.

"Oh she is a very good sort of creature," he said, sitting down

by a table and beginning to arrange the flowers. "One must pay some tribute to the country one lives in. We can't employ absolutely nothing but our own dear countrymen and countrywomen, can we? I am sure we have sufficiently vindicated our patriotism in that direction as it is. Take your Mrs. Peacock;—for a starched-out piece of English propriety one could hardly go beyond her! She would chill the very sun out of the sky if she could only get hold of it for the purpose. Talk of antipathy! that woman gives me the cold shivers every time she comes into the room. I feel as if a large piece of ice, or two or three frogs were slowly making their way down the middle of my spinal marrow?"

Lady Eleanor looked vexed.

"Peacock has been with me ever since I was twelve years old, Algernon," she said, rather hastily. "I should feel like giving up one of my own relations if I sent her away—without, of course, any very urgent reason."

"Goodness, gracious, my dear, I know! Don't imagine for an instant that I want you to send her away. I thought we were only talking in the abstract about our little antipathies. I have mine as well as you yours. It is much better than invariably liking and disliking the same things. Nothing makes domestic life so monotonous, and goodness knows, we don't require any aids in that direction!"

Lady Eleanor did not answer. The Colonel began to think of taking leave. Fortunately a diversion arrived just then in the person of little Jan, her flaxen hair sticking on end, her silk skirt correspondingly elevated, her small face with its serious responsible-looking eyes looking soberly out between the two extensions.

Her father caught her by the arm as she was crossing the room to go to her mother. "Well, Miss Propriety, and how are you to-day?" he enquired.

"Quite well, thank you, father."

It was maintained in the family that Jan had never talked broken English in her life. She had kept a rigid silence until she was nearly three, when one fine day she broke it by a question delivered in unimpeachable English. Whether the tale was true or not, there was no doubt that she spoke with an accuracy which the infant Macaulay might have envied, in spite of a lisp which she made the most heroic efforts to overcome. It followed that nothing offended her so much

as to be addressed in baby language, or accused of baby peccadilloes—a trait which naturally made it amusing to do so.

"So, Miss Prim, and what mischief have *you* been getting into to-day?" her father went on teasingly. "Pulling small brother's hair, or stealing sweets? Eh?"

"I haven't, father!" Jan opened a pair of indignantly grey eyes, the only feature of her small face which bore any resemblance to her mother's.

"Not stealing sweets out of my gold snuff-box? Oh, come, come, take care!"

"No, father, I'm 'thure I haven't."

"You're 'thure you haven't.' Come, think a little. Didn't you see I was behind you all the time, and saw you do it."

"You couldn't have theen me, father, for I didn't. Did I, Muddie?"

"Father is only joking, Jan."

"Joking? Nonsense; don't put such ideas into her head. Little girls who steal sweets, and tell titty-waggers, must expect to be found out."

Jan's eyes were beginning to look suspiciously round, and her mouth to twitch; her little cheeks, too, had become red as fire. Evidently those angry passions of which her mother had been complaining in her own case were alive here too.

"I didn't theel them, and I'm not tellin' titty-waggers!" she said in her little shrill staccato, pulling at her father's hands to try and escape. "And you're a bad, naughty father to say so; yeth you are. It ith *you* are telling titty-waggers!" and again she tried convulsively to escape.

"Hullo, hullo, Miss Propriety! Getting into a tantrum about nothing! Look there! Do you see that big man sitting on that chair. He keeps a black bag on purpose to put little girls into, who get into tantrums and steal sweets, and tell their papas they tell titty-waggers. How should you like to be put in, and the bag tied up quite tight, and that man to carry you away in it, so that you'd never see any of us, mother nor nobody never again?"

John Lawrence felt provoked. It was only a joke, but it did not strike him as a particularly good one. He hated children to be teased for nothing.

Lady Eleanor interposed.

"Please let her go, Algernon," she said. "She is really hurt

at your thinking that she stole the sugar-plums. Do tell her that you were only joking."

"Joking! Do you wish me to perjure myself? The child would never believe me again! Now Jan; one, two, three! Say you're sorry, and then I'll let you go!"

"I'm not thorry, for I didn't. Muddie knowths I didn't!"

"Mother knowths, does she? Mother is very clever, but she wasn't there, so she can't know. Now listen to me. You're not going to be let go until you have said you're sorry. I'll give you three minutes more, and if you haven't said it then, into the black bag you go."

Jan again struggled, looking round for help as she did so. She was a very wise child, but she was not quite wise enough to be certain that the black bag was a myth, and she glanced at the reputed possessor of it with a glance that went to that good-natured personage's heart, and he made haste to clear himself of the odious suspicion.

"Never you mind what he says! They always say they haven't got the bag until they get you safely stowed inside it," said her father. "Now then, Jan, two, three, four. Time's nearly up!"

But Jan only set her teeth and shut up her little lips, as if to hinder a word from slipping through. Her pride was evidently roused, and even with the black bag in prospect she would die before she surrendered.

"Say you're sorry for having been rude to father, dear," her mother said, getting up and going over to her.

But Jan had begun to sob, and was now past speaking.

"Let her go, please, Algernon," said her mother in a tone of entreaty. "She will make herself ill and not be able to sleep a wink to-night," she went on, beseechingly. "And it's so very bad for her temper too."

"Little kittens must learn to control their tempers then. Don't spoil sport, Eleanor. She was just going to give in when you interfered."

"But she really *will* make herself ill, Algernon. You know what an excitable child she is, and how she takes everything to heart. *Do* let her go," Lady Eleanor said earnestly, taking hold of one of her husband's hands as she spoke, to enforce her appeal.

John Lawrence had all the mind in the world to go to her aid, but wisely refrained. Indeed, it was unnecessary. Algernon

Cathers resisted, laughing the while at her and himself. Finger by finger, however, his grasp was unfastened. Suddenly Jan, with a shrill cry of delight, escaped and fled round to the other side of her mother, grasping her skirts tenaciously with both little liberated hands.

Her father made no effort to recapture her. He was laughing still, but threw himself back in his chair, as if tired with the struggle.

"Oh if you choose to bring brute force to bear upon discipline and moral training, of course they must go to the wall," he declared. "I never flattered myself that I was a fit match—physically, at any rate—for your ladyship," he added meaningly.

Lady Eleanor did not answer. She was soothing little Jan, who still sobbed and clung convulsively to her skirts, as if in terror of being dragged away.

"Hush, hush, Jan! There, that will do! Don't cry any more, dear. It was only a joke. When you are a little older you will know the difference between joke and earnest."

Jan ceased sobbing. She was evidently a small person with a good deal of self-control. She still, however, clung to her mother, eyeing her father from behind that defence with an air of suspicion naturally not a little irritating to the latter.

"Pack her off to the nursery," he said, impatiently, turning to collect the flowers, which had got scattered over the table in the struggle. "Kittens that mew and scratch the minute they're touched must be put into their baskets and kept there!"

"Mlle. Riaz has gone out, but I will take her up to Peacock in a minute or two," his wife answered.

"Ah when she is with Mlle. Riaz nothing of this sort happens!"

Meanwhile John Lawrence had got up to go.

"Going, Colonel?" his host enquired. "This 'domestic and particular broil' has been too much for you. I assure you it doesn't happen every day. In fact we never fight except over the kittens. Do we, Eleanor? Come and dine with us this evening, and you will see. The kittens will be safe upstairs in their baskets then."

But John Lawrence replied rather gravely that he couldn't, he was afraid, dine that evening.

"To-morrow, then? Have you a friendly heart in your bosom, and can you resist our appeal? Here I am tied by the leg to this 'doleful, dolorous, midland sea'—never was a truer

description! and the only alleviation is the occasional sight of a new face, and a fresh ear to pour my complaints into. As a friend of peace too, if in no other character, you ought to come. If I have no other resource I must fall back upon the time-honoured Briton's right of tormenting my wife and family. What other occupation have I? Persuade him, Eleanor."

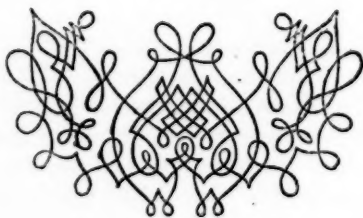
"Do please come to-morrow," she said earnestly. "You will be giving us the very greatest pleasure."

"There you see! she expects you to intervene between her and her natural tyrant. Can you refuse?"

"Thanks, if you are sure it really suits you I shall be happy to come to-morrow," the Colonel answered rather formally.

He had already shaken hands with Lady Eleanor, and now moved toward the door, Algernon Cathers getting politely up to open it. As the latter was leaving the table, he again caught up the great odoriferous bunch of orchids, and held it lovingly to his nose. This time, however, something was wrong apparently with the scent, or it was different from what he expected, for with a grimace, and a gesture expressive of humorous disgust, he suddenly tossed the whole brightly coloured bunch bodily into an empty fireplace.

(To be continued.)



Our Library List.

THE REIGN OF QUEEN VICTORIA. Edited by T. H. WARD. (2 vols. 32s. *Smith & Elder.*) Most people are familiar with the difficulty of procuring, in any more convenient shape than statistical volumes and Blue-books, historical information brought closely up to date. Mr. Ward has earned the gratitude of all who, while shrinking from tedious and prolonged researches, desire to acquaint themselves with the actual latter-day progress of their country; he presents us with a classified survey of the various components which form the sum of modern British history, prepared in each case by eminent authorities, and treated in a literary and readable fashion, from the stand-point of the present year. A careful division of the work into such branches as Science (by Professor Huxley), Schools (Matthew Arnold), India (Sir H. Maine), The Army (Lord Wolseley), Literature, Music, The Drama, Religion, &c., enables the reader to turn at once to what particularly interests him, without being impeded by a mass of extraneous matter, while the names of the authors afford an ample guarantee for sound and accurate knowledge, and in many cases for a brilliant style.

LECTURES AND ESSAYS. By the late EARL OF IDDESLEIGH. (1 vol. 16s. *Blackwood.*) The Exeter Literary Society was the fortunate recipient of most of these charming Lectures. They are models of what popular lectures ought to be; entertaining, and yet instructive, full of high thoughts, simply and gracefully expressed; enriching the subject chosen with a wealth of illustration, attractive and amusing, but always pointed and relevant; and permeated with a deep sense of personal responsibility to the audience, for maintaining a high standard both in the matter and manner of discourse. Most of us remember the address on "Desultory Reading," at Edinburgh in 1885, and the amusing lecture "On Nothing," at Exeter in 1884. But the earlier Essays on "Taste," "Accuracy," "Names and Nicknames," &c., are conceived in an equally happy vein. Those which deal with Social and Historical subjects need alarm no one; their information is sound without being wearisome, and the tale is always adorned, while the

moral is being pointed. "Archæology of Devon and Cornwall," for instance, is a formidable title, but we can safely recommend the paper to the most frivolous reader.

IMAGINARY PORTRAITS. By WALTER PATER. (1 vol. 6s. *Macmillan*.) Mr. Pater has a difficult task in investing these imaginary portraits with interest and reality, but his success is complete. The sustained charm of his language, and the poetical combinations of atmosphere and mind that he weaves, produce an intense impression. The portraits are of four men of the 18th, the 13th and the 17th centuries, and their histories have evidently been suggested by some record, artistic or literary, which has served as a clue to their character. Thus Mr. Pater has detected in Watteau's joyous pictures the essential melancholy of a man who was "always a seeker after something in the world, that is there in no satisfying measure, or not at all." Though the descriptions in Denys l'Auxerrois of the vine-country, and the old cathedral towns of France could hardly be surpassed for beauty, perhaps the most masterly portrait, as a whole, is that of Sebastian van Stenck, who in the midst of the contented prosperity of Holland, desires annihilation as the only legitimate inference from the unreality of the world. Readers may feel that Mr. Pater has constituted himself the High Priest of minds diseased, but his morbid studies are made grand by fancy, and his perception of natural beauty is exquisitely keen.

LETTERS AND RECOLLECTIONS OF JULIUS AND MARY MOHL. By Mrs. SIMPSON. (1 vol. 15s. *Kegan Paul*.) Madame Mohl's recollections embrace almost the whole of this century, and her letters form a kind of mirror in which all sorts of important events and interesting people are brilliantly reflected. She was intimate with Madame Récamier and her tender circle of friends. Victor Hugo, Ampère, Thiers, and other famous representatives of the Young France of the day, haunted her mother's drawing-room, glad to find a witty young lady who held their views. Till the war in 1870 her *salon* was the resort of the most distinguished men in France, while her constant visits to England with Monsieur Mohl kept her in touch with the best English society. Her letters are not only remarkable for the force and liveliness of her descriptions and comments, but are also an admirable example of what may be made out of life by a clever warm-hearted woman of the world. Monsieur Mohl's accounts of contemporaneous events are extremely interesting, full of solid judgment and sarcastic humour. The letters of the husband harmonise, while they contrast with the letters of the wife. We need only add that Mrs. Simpson has done her work of narration and interpretation as well as could be desired.

JACOB'S WIFE. By ADELINE SERGEANT. (3 vols. *Hurst & Blackett*.) Geoffrey Vanborough, falsely accused of forgery, but unwilling to expose the real criminal, his brother Gilbert, is disowned by his father, Sir Wilfred, and emigrates to Buenos Ayres, accompanied by a friend, Nigel Tremaine, the accepted lover of his sister Clarice. There they meet the villain Jacobi, who, overhearing the true story of the forgery, repairs to England with the twofold object of levying black-mail upon Gilbert Vanborough, and revenging himself upon Geoffrey for having frustrated him in an attempt to rob and murder Nigel. Worming himself into Sir Wilfred's confidence, Jacobi becomes his secretary, embitters his feud with Geoffrey, and finally receives permission to woo Clarice, whose engagement to Nigel is broken off by her father. Jacobi's wife then appears as an instrument of retribution, and a tangled skein of events is gradually unwound, with the aid of Joan Darenth, a yeoman's daughter, who differs from Geoffrey as to whether she is good enough for him, and Dr. Burnett Lynn, always a useful man at a crisis. The plot is exciting, but unduly complicated and extravagant; the reader will find himself interested in the action of the story, but not in the personality of the characters.

THELMA. By MARIE CORELLI. (3 vols. *Bentley*.) A third of this novel is occupied with the courtship of Thelma Güldmar, a beautiful Norwegian peasant, and Sir Philip Bruce Errington, who meets her in the Alten Fjord during a yachting cruise. They marry, come to England, and move in fashionable society. Misunderstandings arise, and Thelma flies back to the Alten Fjord, whither Sir Philip follows her. Then everything is satisfactorily explained, and reconciliation takes place.

The description of Norwegian life and scenery is hopelessly inaccurate; those flights of imagination which characterized 'The Romance of Two Worlds' are hardly appropriate to the well-known Scandinavian coast, and if the author could not go over the ground herself, she might at least have consulted a guide-book. Her picture of London Society is equally false and misleading: we confess, however, our incompetence to criticise her sketch of high life below stairs, but we hardly suppose it can be drawn from nature. Miss Corelli thinks that abuse is the best thing for an author to aim at now-a-days, and her ambition ought to be thoroughly gratified.

JILL AND JACK. By E. A. DILLWYN. (2 vols. *Macmillan*.) There are the materials for a capital play in this novel. *Dramatis personæ*:—Miss Gilbertina Trecastle (Jill), young, rich, wilful, independent and irresistible. Miss Ellen Morton, a young lady with nerves, also rich, the ward of Mr. and Mrs. Hawk, who are the next heirs to her property. Mr. Gaston Brook, in love with Miss Morton;

Sir John Wroughton, a lazy dandy with some good stuff in him, *not* in love with Miss Trecastle. His mother, his valet, &c. &c. The mainstay of the plot consists in the machinations of the Hawks to secure Miss Morton's money and prevent her marriage, while the rest of the characters combine to frustrate these sinister designs. All the parts are well sustained, the action bright and lively, the situations amusing, and the catastrophe absurdly sensational.

A FALSE START. By HAWLEY SMART. (3 vols. *Chapman & Hall*.) This novel appears appropriately in the Racing Season. The story turns upon the fortunes of "the Wandering Nun," a mare belonging to Mr. John Madingley, who promises the half of all the prizes she may win to his niece, Bessie Madingley, as a wedding present. Bessie marries the Rev. Maurice Enderby, and their career is constantly influenced by the vicissitudes which befall "the Wandering Nun," in whose train a number of incidents and characters are accumulated. We take our leave of Mr. Enderby serving as an aide-de-camp in the Zulu war; the circumstances of his transformation must be left for those who undertake the perusal of a readable but somewhat aimless book.

FREDERICK HAZZLEDEN. By HUGH WESTBURY. (3 vols. *Macmillan*.) If rumour rightly attributes the authorship of this book to a prominent politician, it should serve to remind us how desirable a thing it is for a cobbler to stick to his last. There have not been many Vivian Greys, nor will Mr. Westbury supplement the number. A bomb designed on the cover warns the reader to expect a dynamite story. Nevertheless, although the bomb does actually explode in Westminster Abbey, the narrative is but mildly sensational, nor do the shafts of satire aimed at provincial politics and other phases of modern society strike us as especially keen or penetrating; Kate Wynnston, however, is a charming little figure, of whom we would willingly have heard more.

